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CLASS MOBILITY, ETHNICITY AND MIGRATION: EXPLAINING PROTEST PARTICIPATION IN  
TURKEY

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### ABSTRACT

The thesis investigates the protest participation behaviors in response to changes in class and class mobility, ethnicity, and migration in Turkey. Using the household-level data collected by the collaboration of the KONDA Research and Consultancy Firm and the Emerging Markets Welfare Project, the thesis examines how class systems interact with migration and ethnicity in shaping individuals' protest participation attitudes. The thesis aims to portray protest participation choices by examining three interrelated layers: first, it provides the most updated class profiling for the Turkish population as of 2019. Second, it provides diagonal reference modeling results on the divergent pathways of the Kurdish population. Third, it scrutinizes the effect of migration on Kurdish mobilization after the 1980s. By employing quantitative methods of mobility research, the thesis aims to achieve a synthesized theoretical framework on how class mobility interact and effect protest participation behaviors. The thesis further discusses the local and global political-economic context that would result in divergent protest participation behaviors of migrant Kurds. It aims to achieve a synthesized theoretical framework that would position at the intersection between social movement studies and mobility research, where we observe that class cleavage still matters in shaping individuals' protest participation preferences.

## ÖZET

Bu tez, Türkiye’de sınıf ve sınıf hareketliliği, etnisite ve göçteki değişimlere bağlı olarak protesto katılım davranışlarını incelemektedir. KONDA Araştırma ve Danışmanlık Firması ve Gelişmekte Olan Piyasalarda Refah Projesi işbirliğiyle toplanan hane düzeyindeki verileri kullanan tez, bireylerin protesto katılım tutumlarını şekillendirmede sınıf sistemlerinin göç ve etnisiteyle nasıl etkileşime girdiğini incelemektedir. Tez, birbiriyle ilişkili üç katmanı inceleyerek protest katılım seçimlerini tasvir etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Birincisi, Aralık 2019 itibariyle Türkiye nüfusu için en güncel sınıf profilini sunmaktadır. İkincisi, Kürt nüfusunun farklı protesto katılım davranışlarının diyagonal referans modellemesi sonuçlarını sunmaktadır. Üçüncüsü, göçün 1980’lerden sonra Kürt siyasi mobilizasyonu üzerindeki etkisini irdeler. Tez, hareketlilik araştırmasının nicel yöntemlerini kullanarak, sınıf hareketliliğinin nasıl etkileşime girdiğine ve protesto katılım davranışlarını nasıl etkilediğine dair sentezlenmiş bir teorik çerçeve sunmayı amaçlamaktadır. Tez ayrıca, göçmen Kürtlerin farklı protesto katılım davranışlarıyla sonuçlanacak yerel ve küresel siyasi-iktisadi bağlamı tartışmaktadır. Sınıf bölünmesinin bireylerin protesto katılım tercihlerini şekillendirmede hala önemli olduğunu gözlemlediğimiz, toplumsal hareket çalışmaları ile sınıf hareketliliği arasındaki kesişme noktasında konumlanacak uyumlu bir teorik çerçeve çizmeyi amaçlamaktadır.

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## INTRODUCTION



## Introduction

This thesis examines the protest participation behaviors in Turkey through its articulation with the larger class systems, ethnicity, and migration. The thesis aims to achieve this by examining protest participation at three interrelated layers: first, it presents the class panorama of Turkey's population by providing descriptive statistics on the class composition based on Portes and Goffman's 8-scale class conceptualization (Portes and Hoffman 2003). It will depict Turkey's class composition to assess current class destinations, familial class origins, and specific mobility patterns. It would also present the divergence between Kurdish and non-Kurdish populations regarding class distribution within a generation. This layer would also provide descriptive statistics on changing class structures of peasants and proletarians.

The second layer of the thesis investigates the likelihood of participating in protests in response to class origins, destinations, mobility, and further covariates. Using the original data collected by KONDA Research and Consultancy Firm and Emerging Markets Welfare collaboration in 2019, the thesis employs diagonal reference modeling (Sobel 1981; 1985) to capture a robust effect of class mobility on protest participation. This layer reveals the divergent patterns of protest attitudes based on an ethnic background in Turkey. As most quantitative studies and statistics show a substantial divergence between Kurdish and non-Kurdish groups in many possible ways, the thesis employs the exact quantitative diagonal reference modeling to the Kurdish sub-group. It captures that Kurds show significantly different protest participation behaviors than the non-Kurds in Turkey.

The third layer of the thesis proposes a possible mechanism for Kurds' divergent protest participation behaviors by examining the interaction between internal migration and class mobility. It supports the effect of migration on adjustments of class composition. The thesis argues that the root causes of divergent protest participation behaviors of Kurds are by class- and migration-related mechanisms. The thesis shows the changing effects of mobility when mobility and migration status interacts among Kurds. The thesis proposes an obsolete tool that

could trace back to adjustments in the global political-economic context, massive migration waves, class structure changes, and, ultimately, protest participation changes.

The thesis aims to position itself within the intersection between social movements studies and mobility research. Furthermore, it employs statistical and quantitative methods supported by the historical-sociological and political-economic dynamics, which is not the predominant methodological preference in recent protest analysis literature. The studies that centralize the changes in class structures and protest behaviors omit the effect of class mobility observed among generations, even in the quantitative social movement studies. However, social class encompasses multiple factors that could be inflexible in shorter time frames. Instead, more extended periods such as generations could reveal significant changes in class structures, which facilitates observing its effect on specific dependent variables. Therefore, the thesis prioritizes examining generational class analysis at the household levels to examine the long-term effect of the social class on protest participation behaviors.

The thesis combines and interacts with multiple dimensions in explaining protest participation behaviors in Turkey. Earlier theories prioritize the material conditions and economic causes in explaining movements; more recent studies further complicate it by considering the effect of other dimensions such as ethnic background and migration. The 'cultural shift' in social research has recently led to the abrupt disappearance of class and capitalism from the social movements studies (Hetland and Goodwin 2013; Della Porta 2015a; Della Porta 2017). The thesis proposes an intersectional study that recognizes the effect of material conditions, global political economy, cultural dimensions such as ethnicity, and political opportunity/structures in explaining protest participation attitudes in Turkey. In this regard, while the thesis primarily focuses on the effect of intergenerational class mobility on protest participation, it aims to articulate ethnicity and migration to capture the divergences in protest participation behaviors within a larger political-economic context.

The primary aim is to provide a framework on protest participation behaviors in Turkey, which further furcates to several sub-questions: does class background play an important role in shaping one's collective action behaviors? How do class, in general, intersect with other factors in determining protest participation behaviors? How do ethnic background and migration status interact with class in affecting protest participation? Considering a multi-dimensional explanation would help formulate more comprehensive theoretical explanations on protest participation as mediums of several and inseparable social, cultural, and economic structures.

### **Theoretical Framework and Research Formulation**

The first theories of social movements in the 19<sup>th</sup> century regards divisions and conflicts among social classes as central to political mobilizations and protests (von Stein 1850; Sombart 1896; Thompson 1963). In this regard, earlier theories have seen an equivalence between workers' movements and industrial actions as the 'social movements.' Theories after the 1960s onwards depict 'the new social movements' by considering the intensifying middle-class and declining working-class participation (Touraine 1971; K. Eder 1995). The new social movements theory opens up new spaces for examining further factors, including race, ethnicity, migration, and framing. Recent studies regard social class as a dimension having limited explanatory capacity in understanding protest participation and social movements. The shift in social movement studies from economic explanations to more cultural explanations overlooks class-related factors. Most studies provide empirical outcomes on the increasing middle-class domination in protest participation (Biswas and Vijaya 2019; March and Kaase 1979; Paulsen 1994; Jenkins and Wallace 1996). Scholars claimed that contemporary movements show the 'normalization of protests,' not only from the aspects that protests are not comprehended as 'marginal and unconventional' and widely consented by larger populations, but the composition of protesters reflects the composition of the general population (Van Aelst and Walgrave 2001).

While studies show the effect of class cleavage on participating in other forms of mobilization such as hacktivism and armed militancy, protest participation is nearly equally distributed to all classes (Shlozman, Verba, and Brady 2012). On the other hand, some still acknowledge that new repertoires of protests such as online activism are widely arenas of the middle-class while conventional protests are still working-class dominated (Schrader 2018). These studies account for education, income, and status as a proxy to a class position.

This thesis study shows that class cleavage still matters for protest participation for the Kurds in Turkey. Earlier resource mobilization studies on the class-protest relationship have strongly recognized the strength of the organized working class through labor unions and grassroots politics (Jenkins 1983; Edwards and McCarthy 2004; Braga 2019). However, adjustments with global neoliberal capitalism lead to the emergence of the informal proletariat and diminish the bargaining power of organized labor in the Global South. In this regard, it will be misleading to frame protest participation behaviors only through industrial actions and strikes of the formal working-class in Turkey due to the mass involvement of the Kurds into the informal proletarian classes. Instead, a more comprehensive explanation would further search for the specific political opportunity/structures for the Kurdish mobilization, focusing on the material conditions and mobilizing factors within a broader political-economic context. While the majority of the Kurds position within larger proletarian and peasantry classes, the effect of the class will not wholly explain the Kurds' protest behaviors per se. This study does not attempt to show a linear relationship between class and protest in Turkey since participating in protests in other economically poorer regions, including the Central Anatolian and the Eastern Blacksea, drastically declines compared to the regions where the majority of the population are Kurds and attained lower classes. In this regard, explaining Kurdish mobilization requires a careful assessment of Kurdish political organizations' historical, cultural, economic, and political determinants and institutional capacity formed under

neoliberal capitalism. While this research partially covers the local historical-sociological context and the political economy of Kurdish discrimination, it also recognizes the organizational capacity provided by Kurdish organizations, which would give a detailed portrait of divergent patterns of Kurdish mobilization.

On the other hand, studies also show that upper-class families provide a more autonomous environment, fostering the likelihood of taking political actions (Sherkat and Blocker 1993; 1994). These studies are predominantly on the Western democracies and do not fully overlap with the social dynamics in the Global South. The literature still lacks a comprehensive theorization of social movements-class relationships in the Global South. Recent studies show that the increasing dominance of the precariat classes (the young unemployed and the informal sector workers) constitutes the base of the social movements in the emerging economies (Elbert 2015; Isaac and Christiansen 2002). These studies theorize the social movements in response to the radical political-economic changes after the 2008 Global financial crisis. Given that most normalization of protests and new middle-class movements theoretically engages with the Global North, emerging markets, including Turkey, reveal a different pattern of protest participation preferences in terms of class basis.

Recently, scholars have observed the 'strange disappearance of capitalism' from protest analysis (Hetland and Goodwin 2013; Della Porta 2015b; 2015a; Della Porta 2017). 2008 Global Financial Crisis and the following anti-austerity movements, Gezi, Occupy, Insignados, and the Arab Spring, necessitate theoretical explanations regarding the intersection of capitalist transformation and protest analysis. Following scholars have continued to adopt this approach and recognize the transformative effect of global neoliberal capitalism on social movements (Della Porta 2017; Della Porta 2007; 2015a; 2015b; Wennerhag 2010; Peterson, Wahlström, and Wennerhag 2015; Waterman 2001a; 2001b). These studies claim that social movement studies would have little explanatory capacity without understanding the global-scale

neoliberal transformation. While it does not automatically mean a 'leave culture behind' perspective, scholars recognize the lack of economic and class-related factors in protest analysis. This gap in the recent social movement literature theoretically nourishes the study by proposing a class-related protest analysis with a multifaceted theoretical inquiry, including migration- and ethnicity-related factors within the context of global neoliberal capitalism. While the class-protest relationship is a century-old research agenda, no studies have shown the relationship between intergenerational class mobility and protest participation behaviors. While early theorists have claimed conflicts capitalist class structure would lead to social movements with predominantly working classes, the following theories and more recent studies provide diverging results. Given that social class is a pillar concept that transforms in the micro-level within short periods, macro changes could only be observed longer timespans. Therefore, intergenerational class mobility constitutes an appropriate unit of analysis for examining the class-protest relationship.

Turkey, in this sense, provides a wide range of social movements, including left-right clashes, ethnic insurgency, environmental and gender-related protests, and Islamist and secular unrest. Within the last decade, after the failed coup d'etat on the 15<sup>th</sup> of July 2015, rising authoritarianism and worsening economic conditions have sparked new impulses for increasing social unrest. Turkey has shown intensifying mobilization as a typical example of emerging economies that suffer from increasing informalization, uneven welfare distribution, rising authoritarian policies, and worsening economic performance. In this regard, this research further seeks to articulate broader theories of social movements on the Global South by examining Turkey.

While the class-protest relationship is a century-old research agenda, no studies have quantitatively shown the relationship between intergenerational class mobility and protest participation behaviors. While early theorists have claimed conflicts within capitalist class

stratification would lead to eruption social movements, more recent studies provide diverging results with complicated explanatory variables. One of the significant problems with using social class as an explanatory variable is that it slowly changes in short periods, where longer timeframes such as generations would depict a more substantive portrayal of changing class structures and their impact on particular dependent variables. In line with this thinking, the research prioritizes intergenerational class mobility on protest participation behaviors, which facilitates observing the effect of the changes in class structures in longer timeframes on protest participation attitudes in Turkey.

Mobility research scrutinizes social changes in response to the changes in larger class hierarchies observed over generations. Researchers have divergent outcomes on the effect of intergenerational class mobility on various dependent variables. For example, some claim there is no robust relationship between intergenerational class mobility and life satisfaction (Marshall and Firth 1999; Zhao et al. 2017; Iveson and Deary 2017); others propose intergenerational downward mobility decreases life satisfaction (Hadjar and Samuel 2015). Those who conceptualize class mobility through education (Nikolaev and Burns 2014; Schuck and Steiber 2018) or status (Clark and D'angelo 2010; Zang and Dirk de Graaf 2016) also provide contrasting consequences. Similarly, scholars who conceptualize intergenerational class mobility through income have diverging outcomes.

Furthermore, mobility research's theoretical and methodological outcomes still have a limited capacity to explain the relationship between intergenerational mobility and protest participation. A broader theoretical framework on how class mobility affects protest participation is still lacking. Moreover, studies also suffer from the methodological concerns that distinguish the direct effect of class origins and class destinations from the indirect effect of intergenerational class mobility. Reducing broader social class concepts into one's class destination or origins could give biased results and avoid proposing more comprehensive

theoretical explanations. Therefore, it is vital to recognize that social class could affect a particular dependent variable through its direct effect of current class positions, the direct effect of former class origins (or class positions of the parents), and the indirect effect of the mobilization patterns.

Methodological concerns to distinguish the direct effect of origins and destinations from the mobility effect is a central debate in mobility research. These issues also proliferated a theoretical research agenda for further class-related explanations. The endeavor to distinguish the effects of origins and destinations from the mobility effect has evolved from Duncan's square additive model (Duncan 1966) to the diamond model in the 1970s and, ultimately, Sobel's diagonal reference modeling (Sobel 1981; 1985). While earlier model specifications failed to capture the sole effect of mobility, Sobel's diagonal reference modeling is currently the most proper and convenient quantitative method to distinguish the relative effect of being mobile compared to being immobile on certain dependent variables. The methodological challenges in identifying the effect of mobility redound in a broader theoretical shortcoming: most class-related analyses could be biased unless they avoid considering the effect of intergenerational mobility (Blalock 1966).

In this thesis, we employ the diagonal reference modeling proposed by Sobel to deal with possible biases. This recognition adjusts how we approach class-protest relationships, focusing on processes (intergenerational mobility patterns) rather than observed class positions and destinations. To put it, the focus shifts from, for example, the effect of being a proletariat on protest participation behaviors to proletarianization, which refers to upward or downward mobility that results in a proletarian destination.

Assessing the effect of class mobility on protest participation in Turkey remains vital; yet, it could be too descriptive alone. The thesis further examines the underlying mechanisms that adjust the relationship between mobility and protest participation. It requires a careful

examination of the global and local political-economic context, ongoing civil war, institutional capacity, and framing structures. Regardless of the dependent variable, statistics show the divergence between the East and the West, Kurdish and non-Kurdish. Hence, the thesis expects different protest participation behaviors between the Kurds and the non-Kurds.

In the Turkish context, migration and ethnic background constitute two highly interrelated phenomena. From the 1960s onwards, there has been a massive Kurdish migration from the rural East to the urban West. Apart from the predominant ethnic dimension of migration to the Western metropolises, those who migrate to the cities transform into proletarians from agrarian classes; thus, changing the class structure. The peasantry of rural Turkey shifts to working-class households for decades due to cultural, economic, social, and political factors. The long-term change in the class structure through migration dynamics could affect the protest participation behaviors, with divergences in collective action behaviors. The thesis aims to portray the protest participation behaviors by considering the triangulation of the class-ethnicity-migration to reach a theoretically more synthesized framework.

The thesis uses the data that is collected explicitly for this thesis. The data includes class-related questions which appropriately suit the conceptualization used in this thesis. On the other hand, the data includes questions on the class profiling of the respondents' former generation, facilitating observation related to mobility patterns. The data also offers a wide range of related covariates for a robust quantitative model which estimates the relationship between class and protest, such as ethnic background, receipt of social assistance provisions, religious sect, ideological penetration, trade union membership, and religiosity.

Against this background, this thesis aims to offer a comprehensive account of how class mobility affects protest participation in Turkey by recognizing the effect of ethnicity and migration mechanisms within the context of global neoliberal capitalism. Rather than analyzing

social movements as case studies, the research aims to portray a general framework on protest participation attitudes in Turkey. In this regard, the thesis would test the following hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 1:* The class origins, destinations, and mobility do not significantly affect protest participation in Turkey due to higher variances among the population in terms of class position and protest behaviors.

*Hypothesis 2:* When the sample is restricted by the Kurds, the class origins, destinations, and mobility have a significant effect, where class mobility results in a negative relationship with the protest participation due to the predominant attainment of Kurds to the lower fragments of the population as well as a historical tendency of Kurds to mobilize politically.

*Hypothesis 3:* The interaction term of class mobility and migration has a negative relationship with protest participation for the Kurds, where the effect of class mobility diminishes because migration stands for a short-term opportunity for upward class mobility.

### **Method and Data**

The data used in the thesis is a cross-section of data collected by the collaboration of the ERC-funded The New Politics of Welfare: Towards an Emerging Markets Welfare State Regime Project and the KONDA Research Consultancy Firm. The data is a monthly module of 2,759-informant stratified random nationally representative KONDA Barometer Survey. It is collected in December 2019. The data provides the most updated statistics on the class profiles in Turkey with the divergences in proletarian classes, including the informal proletariat. Most occupation-based class hierarchies neglect informal workers who experience a rapid exit and entry into the labor market. One of the most common employment-based class schemes, the Eriksson-Goldthorpe-Portocarero scheme, known as the EGP scheme, is no different (Erikson, Goldthorpe, and Portocarero 1979a). A more updated version of EGP, the

European Socio-economic Classification, the ESeC, is also widely used by scholars. These class schemes do not fully overlap with the societal dynamics in the Global South, whose population includes massive informal workers. In this thesis, I employ the class scheme proposed by Portes & Hoffman since there is a specific focus for the sub-categories of proletarian classes (Portes and Hoffman 2003). This particular endeavor is defined as a left-wing operationalization of class since it does not neglect divergences among the working classes. This thesis articulates peasantry at the bottom of the classification scheme. Table 1 shows the classification scheme used in this thesis for Turkey.

### **Mobility Model: Diagonal Reference Modelling**

A general model for the effects of class origins, destinations, and mobility, including further covariates, could be formulated as

$$\text{Model 1: } \text{Protest}_{idom} = \delta_d \text{dest}_{id} + \omega_o \text{orig}_{io} + \gamma_m \text{mob}_{im} + \beta' X_i + \varepsilon_i$$

where parameters  $\delta_d$  for class destinations  $\mathbf{d}$ ,  $\omega_o$  for class origins  $\mathbf{o}$ ,  $\gamma_m$  for mobility levels  $\mathbf{m}$ . The difference between destination and origin gives mobility levels,  $\mathbf{m} = \mathbf{d} - \mathbf{o}$ .  $X_i$  is a vector of covariates, and  $\varepsilon_i$  is the idiosyncratic error term.  $\text{dest}_{id}$ ,  $\text{orig}_{io}$ ,  $\text{mob}_{im}$  are dummies of destination, origins, and mobility levels of respondent  $i$ . Class origins and destinations are reversely coded from 1 to 8 based on Portes and Hoffman's class schema. Unfortunately, Model 1 is not identified due to perfect multicollinearity (Blalock 1966). The specific quantitative method, the Diagonal Reference Modelling (Sobel 1981; 1985), is applied to capture class mobility's effect on protest participation solely. The Diagonal Reference Modelling (DRM) enables us to set constraints to deal with the perfect multicollinearity problem, and so far, it has been the best and most convenient method for quantitative mobility research.

Due to the multicollinearity problem, it is vital to place constraints on Model 1. One resolution to overcome this is to assume  $\delta_d=0$  or  $\omega_o=0$  for all levels  $\mathbf{d}$  and  $\mathbf{o}$ , referring to no

origin or destination effect on protest attitudes. In this scenario, if any  $\delta_d$  or  $\omega_o$  is not equal to zero,  $\gamma_m$  and remaining  $\delta_d$  or  $\omega_o$  will resemble this effect, and ultimately provide biased results.

Excluding mobility, levels could also give biased results. Each of the origins or destination levels could directly affect protest participation and indirectly affect via mobility effect. Since mobility is the direct difference between origins and destination, a step decrease/increase in origin and destination levels directly affects mobility. In models including only origin effects, the coefficient will result in origins' total effects: the direct of origins and the indirect effect via destination and mobility. If destination levels are added, the effect of destination levels would be removed from the origin effects. Still, this kind of modeling will suffer from the omission of indirect effects that run via mobility levels since both origins and destinations coefficient will resemble mobility. Therefore, mobility research employs Diagonal Reference Models proposed by Sobel (Sobel 1981; 1985).

$$\text{Model 2: } \text{Protest}_{idom} = p\delta_d \text{dest}_{id} + (1-p)\omega_o \text{orig}_{io} + \gamma_m \text{mob}_{im} + \beta'X_i + \varepsilon_i$$

The difference between Model 1 and Model 2 is the parameter  $p$ , which is constrained to take values between 0 and 1. The parameter  $p$  enables to detection of the relative impact of destinations versus origins on protest participation.

Previous scholars argued that the effect of class mobility could not be estimated since we cannot fully separate the influence of origins and destinations on mobility effects (Duncan 1966). He, therefore, contributes to the literature by proposing the "square additive model," which allows the distinct effect of origins and destinations to be estimated. In the 1970s, the debate in modeling mobility effects continued, and Hope claimed that the square additive model is still far from a proper estimation of mobility effects since it assumes that the effect of the same class may differ based on whether it is the origin or the destination class and the effect of mobility cannot be estimated (Hope 1971; 1975). He proposed using the "diamond-additive model" for a more refined mobility effect using the one-parameter representing the immobiles'

status effect.<sup>i</sup> However, Sobel argued that diamond-additive models fail in parametrizing the immobile's status effect, which is crucial to estimate to detect the effect of one unit increase in mobility. Therefore, he proposed Diagonal Reference Models based on the assumption that non-mobile individuals constitute the population's benchmark and mobile individuals reflect the effect of origins and destinations. Therefore, Diagonal Reference Models estimate the effect of one unit increase/decrease in mobility on a particular dependent variable with respect to the immobile, who experience no upward or downward mobility within a generation.

Technically, Model 2 is a constrained version of Model 1. DRM models constrain destination effects to be the linear transformation of origin effects. In calculation, the effect of being in class *a* rather than class *a-1* is given by  $p(\delta_a - \delta_{a-1})$ . The same calculation applies for the origin effect with a parameter change by  $(1-p)(\delta_a - \delta_{a-1})$ . Therefore, the only difference is derived from the parameter *p*. It results in the same relative effects of origins and destinations, whereas the absolute effect of the upward/downward steps.<sup>ii</sup>

On the other hand, the data's weakness is that the sample size is relatively small, with 2,759 informants. Since the thesis is around the class and the class mobility, the cross sectionality of the data limits quantitative operations. However, the survey provides data regarding the class positions of informants' families in the former generation. Therefore, it enables detecting the respondents' class origins and subsequently enables them to conduct class mobility research. However, the lack of data to trace the timely changes in class structures prevents us from reaching more robust results. Nevertheless, the originality of the data in terms of class-related information obviates the possible weaknesses and is worth conducting the research.

Chapter I presents the descriptive statistics on the class fluidity observed in a generation. The chapter presents the current class compositions, former class compositions, the class origins of proletarians, and the class destinations of the peasantry for the Kurdish and

non-Kurdish population. For nearly two decades, no serious attempt has achieved a similar degree of success to present the class profiles of Turkey since Boratav's *Istanbul ve Anadolu'dan Sınıf Profilleri*. This thesis supports the recently available data for a more extended class operationalization.

The second chapter of the thesis presents the results of the diagonal reference modeling for class mobility's effect on protest participation. As mentioned above, the chapter recognizes the ethnic divergence and employs the same model for the Kurds separately. The results show that class mobility negatively affects protest participation for the Kurds: upward mobility decreases the likelihood of participating in protests, and downward mobility increases, whereas there is no significant relationship for the overall Turkey population.

The third chapter further examines the class mobility-protest relationship observed for the Kurdish population by accounting for migration. The diagonal reference model shows that class mobility is only significant for the migrant Kurds by adding the interaction term of class mobility and migration status. The negative relationship remains salient; however, the chapter recognizes limitations derived from voting for pro-Kurdish People's Democratic Party (PDP) on protest participation. As voting for the PDP is strongly correlated with protest participation, it leads to a multicollinearity problem. By providing a political-economic portrayal and drivers for Kurdish migration, the chapter discusses the possible mechanisms for the observed negative class mobility and protest participation results for the migrant Kurds.

**CLASS PROFILES IN TURKEY**

From the 1980s, Turkey has seen a rapid and drastic economic change under neoliberal restructurings, such as the implementation of deregulatory policies, rapid privatization, and import substitution industrialization to export-oriented growth trajectories (Cizre-Sakalhoğlu and Yeldan 2000; M. Eder 2010; Önis 2011; Bedirhanoğlu and Yalman 2009; Ozbay et al. 2016; Önis 2011). This change in economic structuring transforms social stratification adjusts mobility patterns. The abolition of mega projects in Anatolia, especially in Turkey's Eastern regions, triggers massive migration waves from rural to urban. Beyond this, under the 1980 coup and following the constitution, formal proletarian classes lose their associational bargaining power due to abolishing the right to strike, collective bargaining, and subcontracting's proliferation. While the capital moves worldwide for more profitable production opportunities provided by an extensive subcontracting system, labor unions begin to abolish and lose their transformative capacity. In addition to the pressure on the formal proletarian classes to become informalized under neoliberal adjustments, new migrants from rural increases the labor supply in the cities and puts downward pressure on the wages. The profitability of the production by way of downward pressures on the real wages rely on an extensive subcontracting system which divides production into micro-processes (E. Yörük 2006a). At the same time, de-formalized and de-unionized working classes expanded, rural peasants continued to become the informal proletariat of urban through migration and put more pressure on wages. Under these conditions, Turkey's class structures dramatically transform, and new classes emerge through upward and downward mobilization patterns.

Beyond these radical changes, new migrant proletarian classes face ethnic and racial discrimination. Due to the lack of access to economic resources, evacuation of villages, and ongoing ethnic insurgency in Turkey's eastern regions, the Kurdish population constitutes the primary vein of rural-to-urban migrants; thus, the majority of the informal proletariat (Göktük 2007; İçduygu et al. 1998; Ç. Keyder 2005; Saraçoğlu 2010; Wedel 1996; E. Yörük 2006a).

The literature provides how the Kurdish migrants struggle with urban market conditions due to their lack of economic, cultural, and social capital (Smits and Gündüz-Hoşgör 2003; Stefanovic, Loizides, and Parsons 2015). Scholars show how the Kurdish migrant proletariat faces social class reproduction with nearly no upward class mobility; However, few studies employ quantitative methods to examine the Kurds' class position in Turkey.

### **Class Profiles in Turkey**

The thesis employs the class schema developed by Alejandro Portes and Kelly Hoffman (Portes and Hoffman 2003). The reasons behind the choice of Portes and Hoffman's schema are as follows: it differentiates the proletarian classes by providing three layers of informal, formal manual, and formal non-manual working classes. Conveniently, the petty bourgeoisie does not fall into occupational class hierarchies, but from a left-wing perspective, petty bourgeoisie constitutes a class that owns the means of production; thus, it should not be disregarded. Professionals, like lawyers, doctors with their clinics, academicians, engineers are within the social stratification. The informal proletariat classifies the following subgroups: unemployed, workers with piece-basis-work at home, a worker within the family business with no payment, hawkers, the unemployed who used to work regularly, the unemployed who used to work irregularly.

The thesis assumes that social classes are hierarchically ordered across production relations. Additional to the 7-scale class schema, we add peasantry as the lowest tier of social stratification and transform Portes & Hoffman scheme into an 8-scale class schema. Convenient social stratification schemas generally disregard peasantry out of the stratification hierarchies (Bukodi and Goldthorpe 2018; Rose and Harrison 2010). Since it is challenging to position agrarian classes within the hierarchies of social structure, scholars refrain from combining urban and rural populations and analyzing the two populations independently. However, omitting agrarian classes assumes many missing data points in the population; hence,

it could cause misleading inferences in quantitative analysis. The existing scholarship provides theoretically nourished outcomes on the relationship between agrarian milieu and mobilization (Buğra and Keyder 2006; Bauerly 2018; Ali 2020; Christodoulou 1990; Gao 2016; Vergara-Camus and Kay 2017). Consequently, removing the agrarian milieu from the social stratification would lead to the draw of limited conclusions.

**Table1: Turkish Class Structure**

| <b>Class</b>                     | <b>Sub-types</b>                                                                                    |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| I. Capitalists                   | Proprietors and managing partners of large/medium firms                                             |
| II. Executives                   | Managers and administrators of large/medium firms and public institutions                           |
| III. Professionals               | University- trained salaried professionals in public service and large/ medium private firms        |
| IV. Petty bourgeoisie            | Own-account professionals and technicians, and micro-entrepreneurs with personally-supervised staff |
| V. Non-manual formal proletariat | Vocationally-trained salaried technicians and white-collar employees                                |
| VI. Manual formal proletariat    | Skilled and unskilled waged workers with labor contracts                                            |
| VII. Informal proletariat        | Non-contractual waged workers, casual vendors, and unpaid family workers                            |
| VIII. Peasantry                  | Farmers, animal husbandry, and stock farmers                                                        |

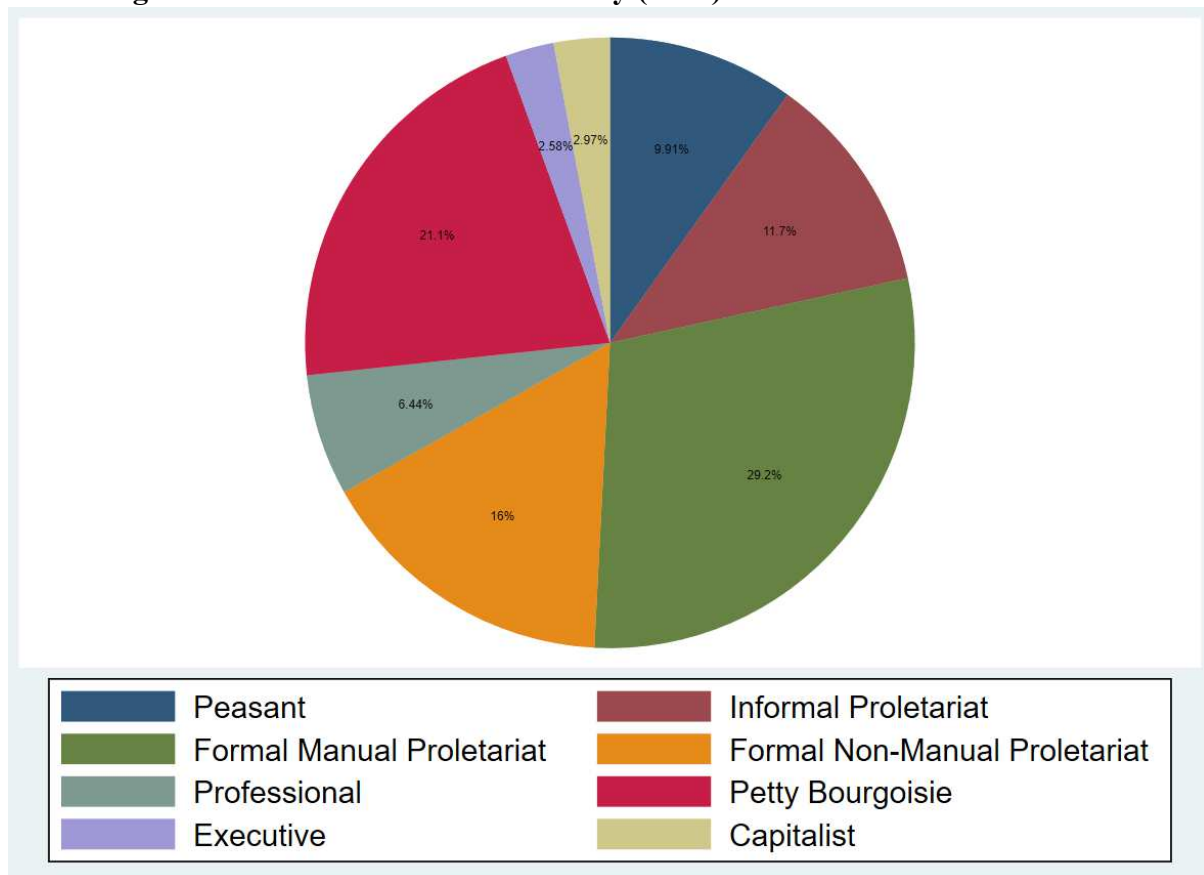
SOURCE: (PORTES AND HOFFMAN 2003)

Combined with the strength of the data, which asks the questions that aim to discover households' class positions, the thesis applies the class conceptualization drawn by Alejandro Portes and Kelly Hoffman (Portes and Hoffman 2003). Table 1 shows the class conceptualization used in the thesis. However, the operationalization of the class positions is much complicated than conceptualizing. In practice, individuals could attach themselves to different occupations. A worker who runs a small business and a lawyer who works as a consultant executive could create duplicate entries. In order to deal with this problem, the thesis employs the "dominance approach" by Erikson to solve the duplication problem, assigning individuals to the higher class when individuals have different occupations over their lifetime (Erikson 1984, 500–514). Erikson outlined the dominance coding for social class, arguing that a household's living condition is more often structured by the dominant class position (Erikson 1984, 500–514). Therefore, individuals who attach themselves to more than one occupation are coded as within the highest options. In other words, a worker who also runs a small business is coded as petty-bourgeois. It is vital to clarify that individuals do not assign themselves to class positions but occupations. Table 1 acknowledges how this thesis assigns different occupations to different classes. The conceptualization and operationalization of class destinations are the same as the class positions. Class destination refers to parental class when the informants were 14 years old.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of class profiles as of 2019 in Turkey. The sample size is 2,019. The descriptive pie chart shows that proletarian classes constitute 56.9% of the whole population, including formal manual, formal non-manual, and informal proletariat. The thesis employs the concept of "broad people's coalitions" that constitute the proletarian classes in addition to the peasantry. Boratav in *Istanbul ve Anadolu'dan Sınıf Profilleri* (1995) offers to compose class coalitions for urban and rural spheres<sup>iii</sup>:

"In this context, we could make 'blending' for some overlapping situations: it will not result in serious objections to define the sum of the blue-collars + unqualified service + unemployed as the urban working class, the middle-big bourgeoisie (including or excluding petite bourgeoisie) as the urban bourgeoisie. At the most encompassing

**Figure 1: The Class Profiles in Turkey (2019)**

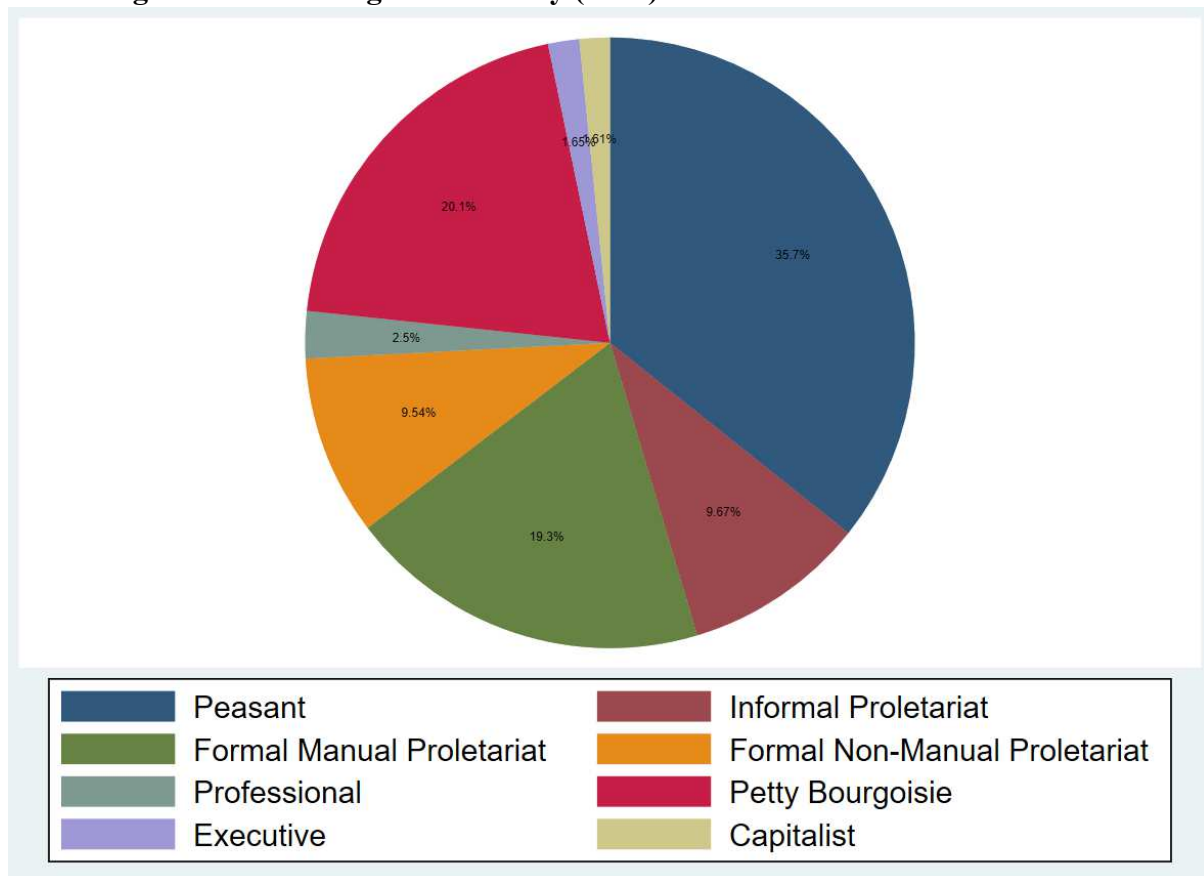


SOURCE: KONDA BAROMETER SURVEY, SOCIAL POLICY MODULE (2019)

meaning of working-class, could we say that it comprises the white-collars and the retired in addition to the three groups mentioned above? Maybe. However, it will be better defined as "the waged/salaried of the past, present, and possible future" rather than a "class" for this broad group. On the contrary, one could argue against combining the unemployed + the blue collars + the unqualified service + the white-collar + the self-employed as the "people's class coalitions" (1995, 6–7).

Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of parental class positions, namely, class origins, when the informants were 14 years old. The most striking change is in the peasantry classes; the most populous section of the society with 35.7%, while in the next generation, nearly constitutes 10% of the population. That signals the abolition of agrarian classes within a generational period. The descriptive pie chart shows the post-1980 economic readjustment program and policies implemented under Washington Consensus, which resulted in a drastic decrease in the agrarian population. Accordingly, proletarian classes are 32.87%, which seems

**Figure 2: Class Origins in Turkey (2019)**



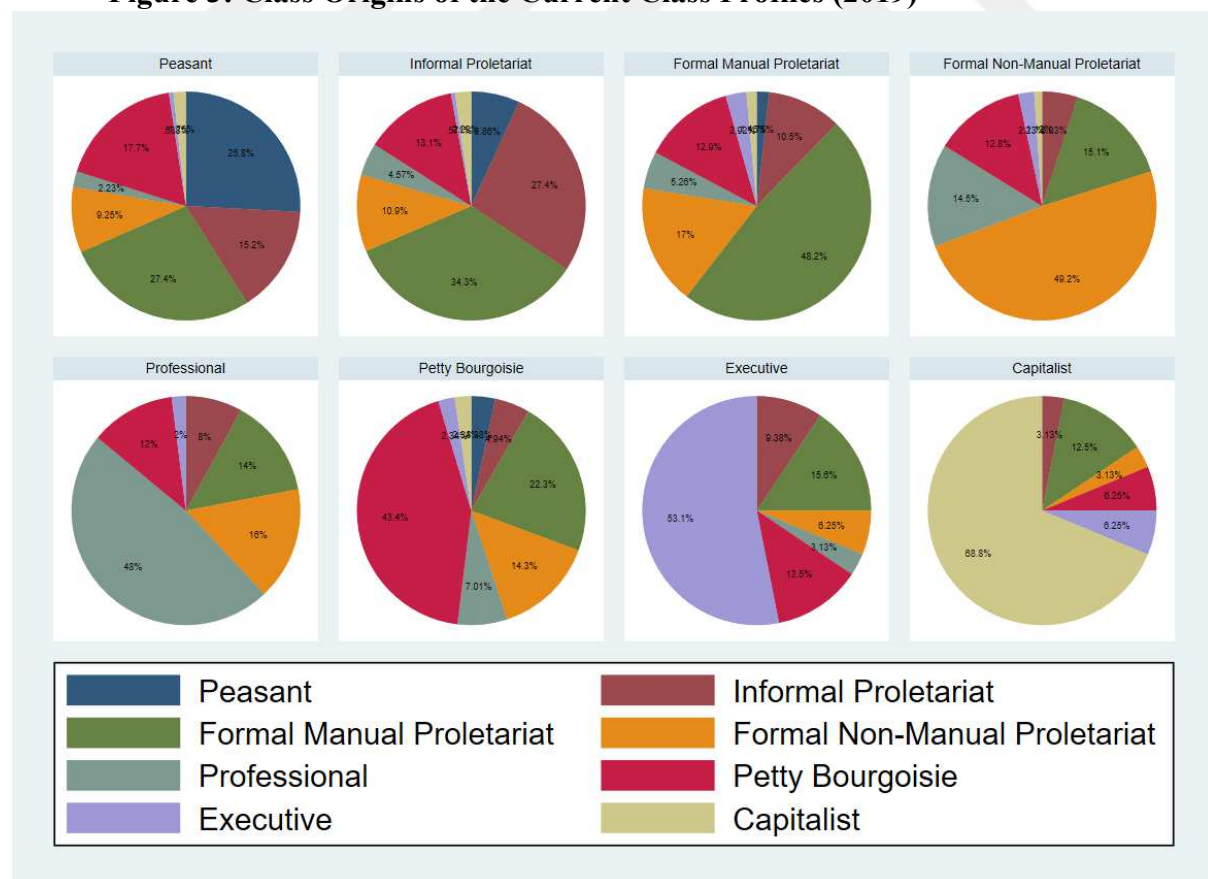
SOURCE: KONDA BAROMETER SURVEY, SOCIAL POLICY MODULE (2019)

to be the second significant difference within a generation—professionals in the society increase from 2.1% to 6.44%, with a nearly threefold increase. The proliferation of the higher education institutions, newly emerged private colleges, and non-profit educational organizations, rapid migration to the urban hemisphere that would lead to more access to

cultural capital sources like schools, courses, diploma, and certificate programs could constitute the reasons behind the nearly triple times increase in the professional classes. The pie chart also illustrates that the remaining classes remain steady, with 20.1% petty bourgeoisie, 1.61% capitalists, 1.65% executives.

The drastic changes in the proletarian and agrarian classes within a generation invite us to consider Turkey's rapid political-economic and social changes. In this debate, it is vital to refer to Boratav's "broad people's coalitions" again: the total percentage of the agrarian and proletarian classes is 74.17%. After a generational period, it turns into 66.86% of the whole population. Therefore, despite massive changes in the proletariat and agrarian milieu's in-class populations, the coalition's aggregate population does not reflect this change. Roughly analyzing the ultimate consequence of the neo-liberal restructuring is to turn farmers of the past into today's workers by dispossession, privatization, and migration mechanisms.

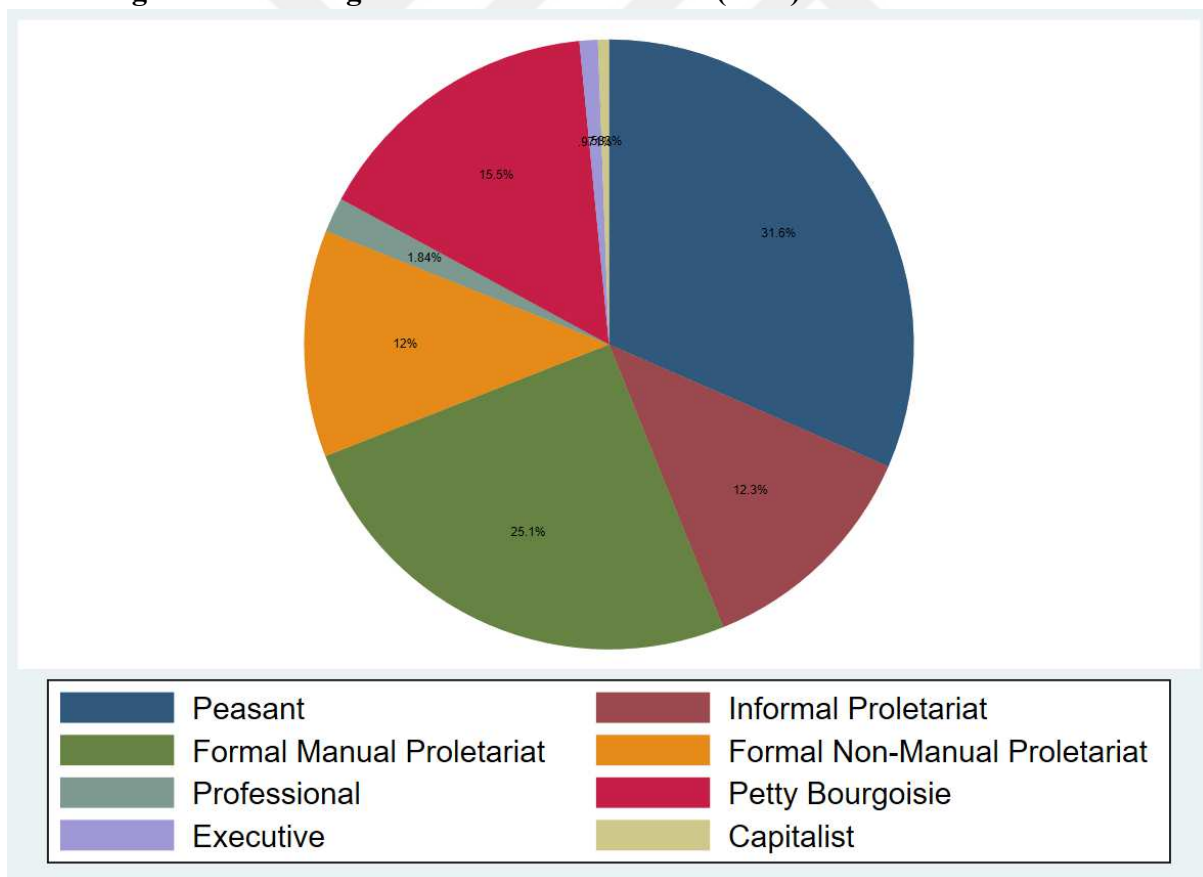
**Figure 3: Class Origins of the Current Class Profiles (2019)**



SOURCE: KONDA BAROMETER SURVEY, SOCIAL POLICY MODULE (2019)

Figure 3 displays the class origins of each class position. Except for the peasants and the informal proletariat, each class constitutes its primary domain. Current capitalists are the children of their capitalist households by 68.8%, and executives grow up in households, 53.1% of which are also executives. 43.3% of the former petty-bourgeois households remain petty bourgeoisie, while 22.3% of today's petty bourgeoisie were the once formal manual proletariat families. 48% of the former professional households continue to position as professionals. Similarly, for manual and non-manual proletarian classes, the chart enables us to infer a class position continuum. In this regard, Turkey's class profiling partially corresponds to the reproduction of social classes—class origins affect the determination of current class positions.

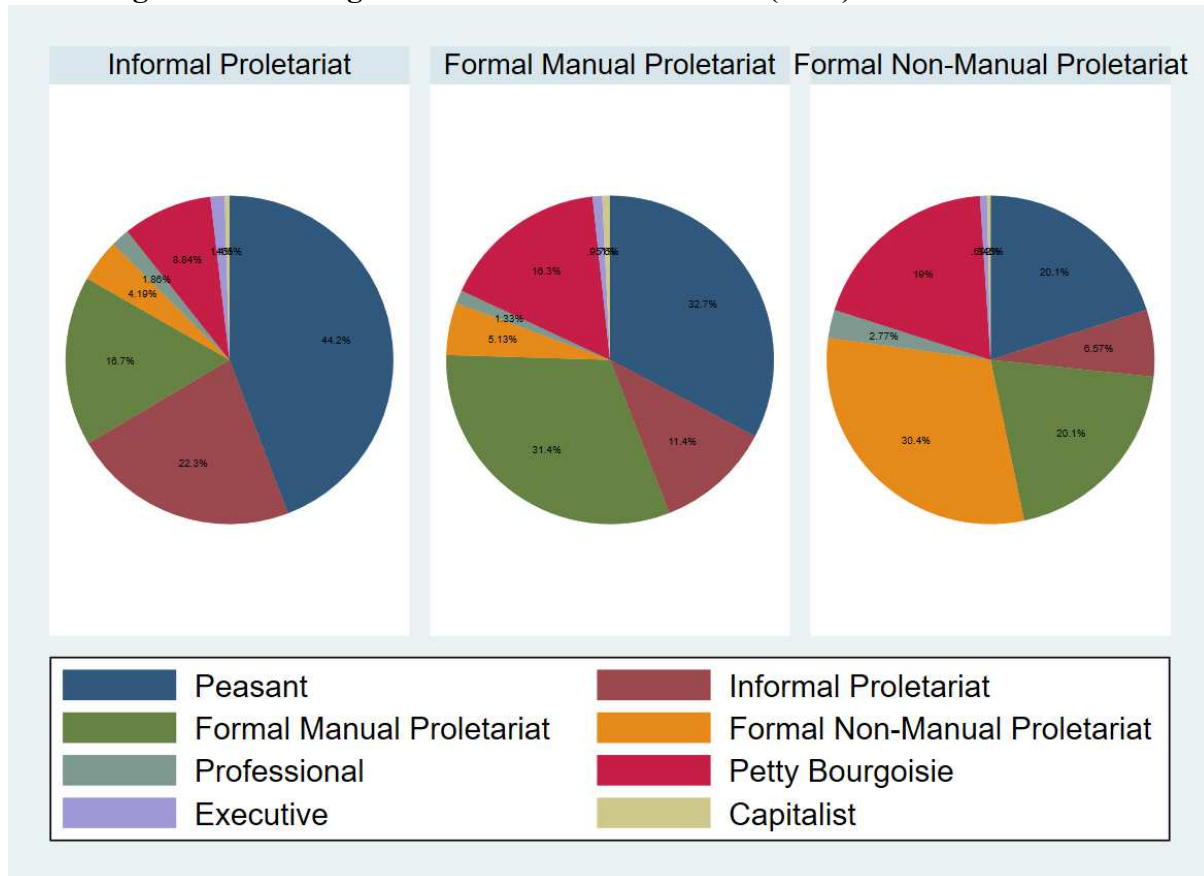
**Figure 4: The Origins of Proletarian Classes (2019)**



SOURCE: KONDA BAROMETER SURVEY, SOCIAL POLICY MODULE (2019)

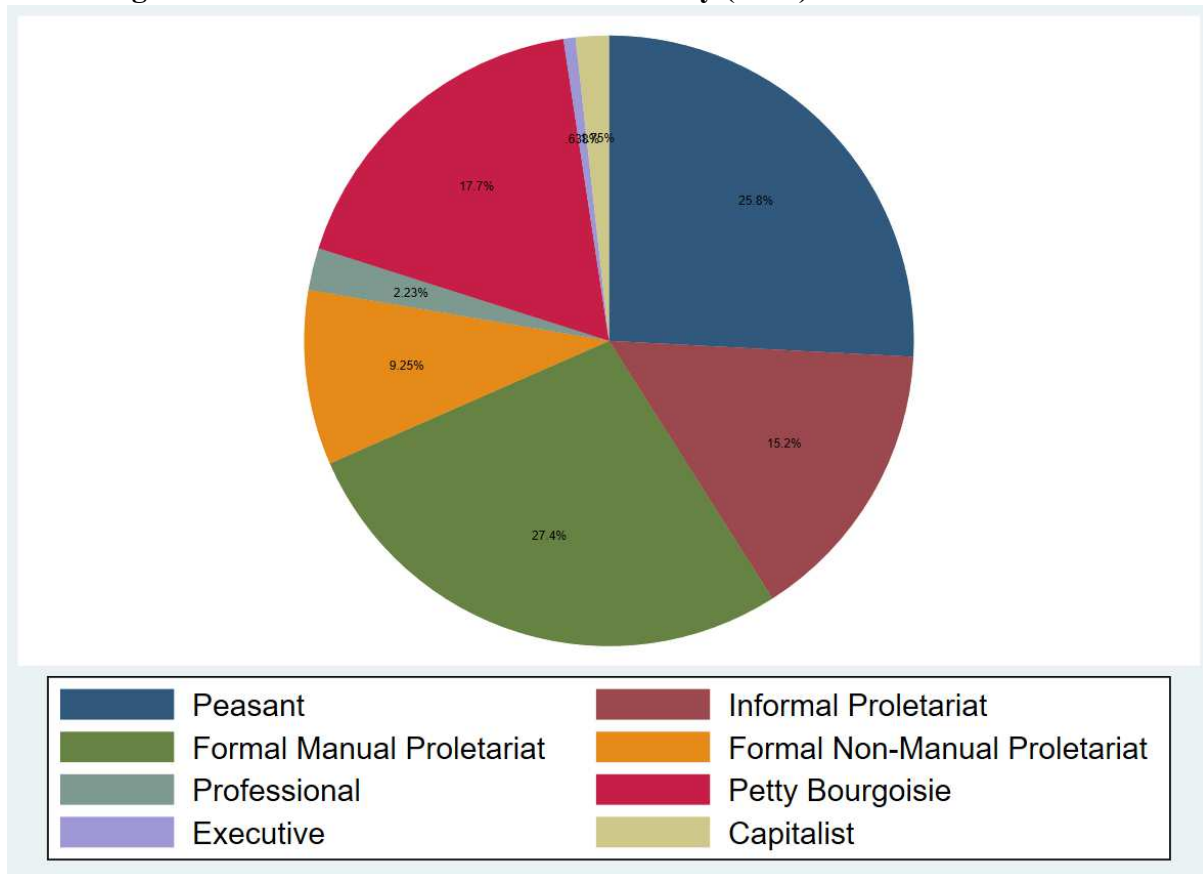
Figure 4 shows the origins of the proletarian classes. It refers to the formal manual, formal non-manual, and informal proletariat. The figure shows that 49.4% of the current proletarians were the children of proletarians, with 12.3% of the informal, 25.1% of the formal manual, and 12% formal non-manual proletariat. In line with "broad people's coalitions," 80% of the current proletariat grows initially in either a proletariat or a peasant household. Only nearly 3.5% of the current proletarians have the class origins of professionals, executives, and capitalists.

The petty bourgeoisie constitutes deviance in size and class background in nearly all descriptive statistics and requires an explanation. This "inconsistency" is the mismatch between the operationalization of the petty bourgeoisie and the Turkish petty-bourgeois classes' economic conditions. After the 1980s, Turkey has created a new wave of petty bourgeoisie classes. The increasing population in cities and early attempts to liberalize Turkish markets triggers a new wave of clientelism and patronage (Sayarı 2014; Sunar 2019; Ark-Yıldırım 2017). Lack of well-established institutions and premature and rapid market liberalization have brought regulatory vulnerability where actors desire to benefit. Therefore, many actors favor rentier, from small bribes to big real estate presents. However, it does not automatically mean that all these actors benefit from these rentier-based economic relations; the surplus created is unequally distributed among actors. Therefore, many petty-bourgeois classes remain vulnerable to market pressures and may quickly become proletarianized. However, conceptually, social class is related to income and encompasses production and occupational divisions. Regardless of the income generated, the petty bourgeoisie is a class that owns the means of production; therefore, it should be positioned accordingly within the social stratification. This theoretical and practical divergence causes a standard "inconsistency" in the descriptive pie charts for the petty bourgeoisie.

**Figure 5: The Origins of Each Proletarian Class (2019)**

SOURCE: KONDA BAROMETER SURVEY, SOCIAL POLICY MODULE (2019)

Figure 5 shows the class origins of each proletarian class. As mentioned earlier, the informal proletariat's most eminent domain is the peasants who migrate to the urban hemisphere. 87.44% of the informal proletariat belong to families part of the "broad people's coalitions." The formal manual workers originated from families positioned within a peasantry or formal manual working class. The rate of connection to the broad people's coalitions is 80.61%. The formal non-manual proletariat shows a different portrayal of class background. 30.4% of the formal non-manual proletariat connects to formal non-manual proletarian families. In contrast to other proletarian classes, the peasantry rate is relatively low by 20.1% and the informal proletariat rate by 6.57%. In this regard, the formal non-manual proletariat, which encompasses the white-collar workers and technicians who own cultural capital to a certain extent, is resistant to market pressures.

**Figure 6: Class Destinations of the Peasantry (2019)**

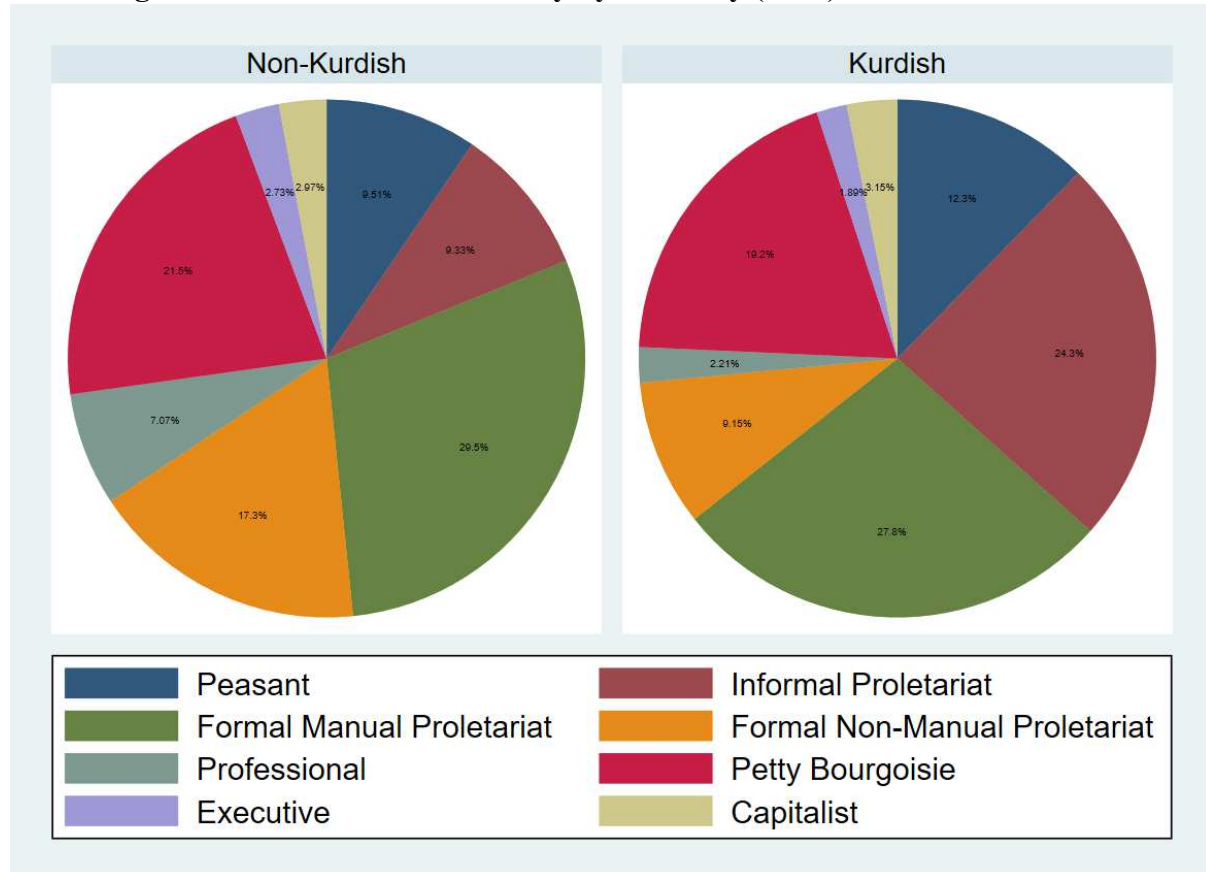
SOURCE: KONDA BAROMETER SURVEY, SOCIAL POLICY MODULE (2019)

Peasantry and informal proletariat constitute the most fluid classes of the social stratification due to the post-1980 economic conditions. They can quickly enter and exit from the labor market. Neo-liberal policies catalyze the fluidity of class mobility of these two classes: the peasants and the informal working class can easily be connected to other classes within short periods. Figure 6 shows the class destinations of households who are initially peasants. Nearly a quarter remain as peasants, while 51.25% experience proletarianization. Strikingly, only nearly 4% of the peasants become capitalists, professionals or executives. It supports the argument that there is a continuum in social mobility; lower classes remain at the bottom.

### The Kurds and Class

The data allows us to display the ethnic dimension of class profiling. Specifically, the class positions and origins of the households who express themselves as Kurdish could give earlier background information for a more sophisticated class analysis.

**Figure 7: Class Profiles in Turkey by Ethnicity (2019)**

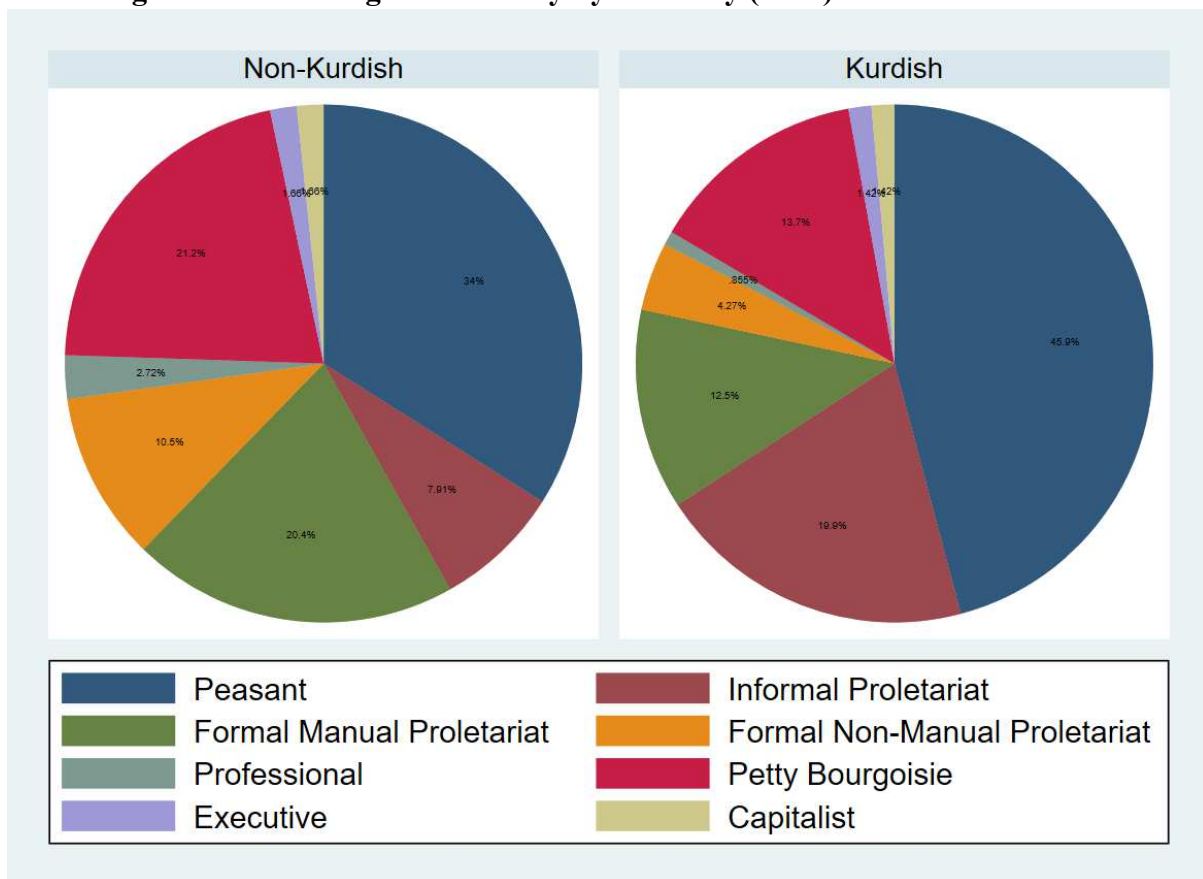


SOURCE: KONDA BAROMETER SURVEY, SOCIAL POLICY MODULE (2019)

Figure 7 illustrates the class profiles of the Kurdish and non-Kurdish populations in Turkey. The striking divergence among these two populations is in the informal proletariat, where it is 9.33% of the non-Kurds and 24.3% of the Kurds. Considering that further analysis is required, the Kurds' claim to informalization from peasantry is partially supported. Expansion of the informal economy and related proletarian classes is a four-decade-old phenomenon. The Kurdish population primarily supplies the demand for labor for the informal economy. The statistics on the professionals and formal non-manual proletariat, which require qualified cultural capital, present the second striking antagonism between the Kurds and non-

Kurdish populations. The formal non-manual proletariat's size for the non-Kurds is nearly double of the Kurds, whereas the difference is more than triple for the professionals. The descriptive statistics indicate that ethnic background matters in determining one's class position, and the following pie chart regarding the class origins of the Kurds and non-Kurds would illustrate whether the divergence existed in the earlier generation.

**Figure 8: Class Origins in Turkey by Ethnicity (2019)**

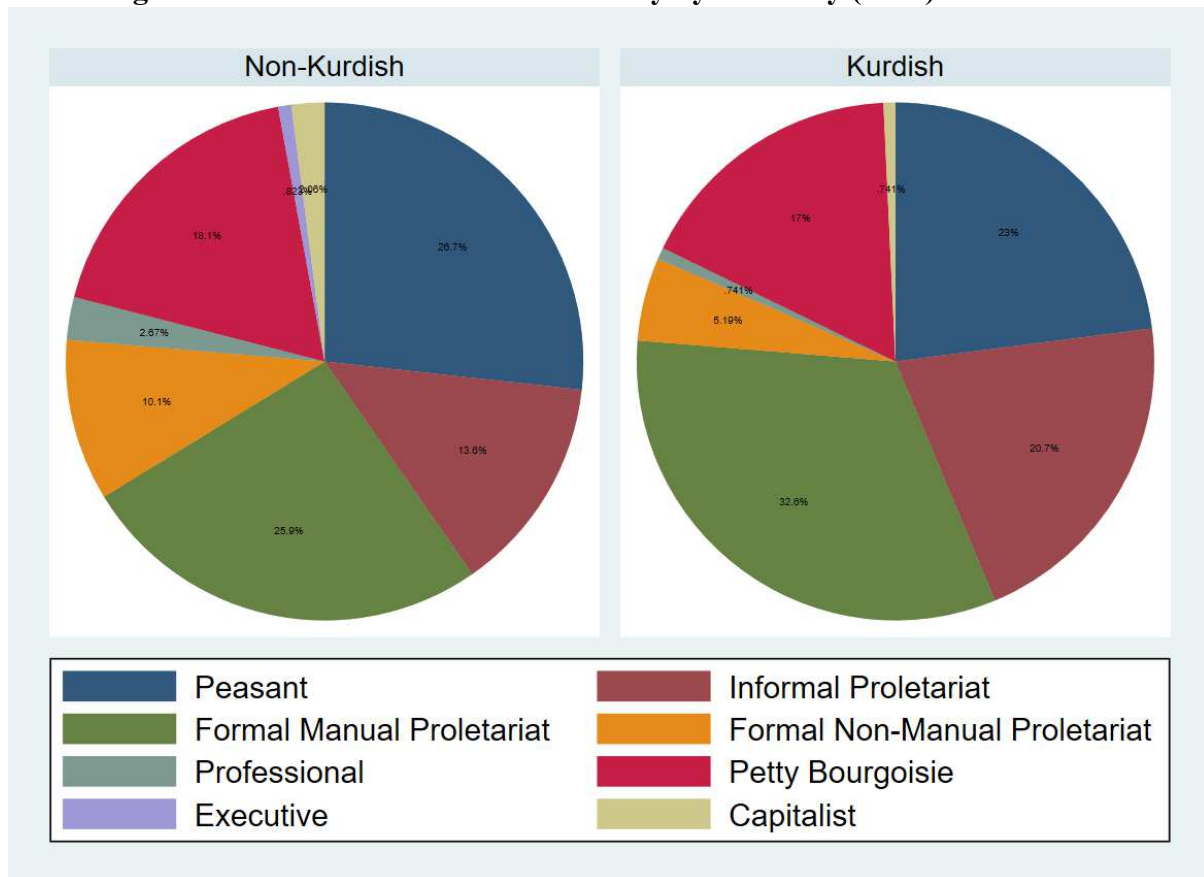


SOURCE: KONDA BAROMETER SURVEY, SOCIAL POLICY MODULE (2019)

Figure 8 displays the class origins of the Kurds and non-Kurds. A vast majority of Turkey's population is peasants, 34% for the non-Kurds and 45.9%. The informal proletariat's comparison signals the continuum of informalization for the Kurds since the proportion of the informal working class is nearly 2.5 times higher in the Kurdish population. The formal manual working-class size supports this argument: 20.4% of the non-Kurds are formal manual

workers, while 12.5% of the Kurds are within the formal working class. The rate of the formal non-manual proletariat in the non-Kurdish population is nearly 2.5 times higher than that of the Kurdish population, so the claim that the ethnic background affects class position is still supported.

**Figure 9: Class Destinations of Peasantry by Ethnicity (2019)**



SOURCE: KONDA BAROMETER SURVEY, SOCIAL POLICY MODULE (2019)

The rate of proletarianization from peasantry constitutes one of the pillar debates of post-1980 restructuring in Turkey. Since neoliberal restructuring abolishes the agrarian milieu and aims to achieve an informal reserve army in the urban sphere, it would be crucial to depict how Kurds and non-Kurds experience proletarianization. Figure 9 shows the class destinations of the peasant classes by ethnic background. As seen, Kurdish peasantry classes experience 1.5 times higher informalization compared to the non-Kurdish peasants. For all proletarian classes, including the formal manual, the formal non-manual, and the informal, the rate of

proletarianization from peasantry is 58.5% among the Kurds, whereas it is 49.6% among the non-Kurds. In addition to the gap in proletarianization, the rate of formal non-manual proletarianization, which requires cultural capital to a certain extent, constitutes another divergence between the Kurds and non-Kurds. The share of formal non-manual proletarianization within the overall proletarianization<sup>iv</sup> is 20.35% (10.1% / 49.6%) among the non-Kurds whereas it is 8.87% (5.19% / 58.5%) among the Kurds. The peasantry's professionalization rate is nearly 3.5 times higher in the non-Kurds compared to the Kurds.

## Conclusion

The post-1980 economic policies have reshaped Turkey's class profiles by abolishing mega development projects in the rural, rapid privatization, proliferation of subcontracting, and elimination of solid labor unions. Nearly all descriptive pie charts point out four significant consequences: (i) capitalists, executives, and professionals comprise the upper tiers of social stratification with less downward mobility and heterogeneity in terms of origins; (ii) proletarian classes and peasantry are the lower tiers with more mobility and heterogeneity; (iii) petty bourgeoisie constitutes a deviational case since Turkish petty bourgeoisie, and ideal "petty-bourgeois" concept do not fully overlap; (iv) among the proletarian classes, non-manual formal proletariat conveys the characteristics of both lower and upper tiers of social hierarchies.

The descriptive statistics support the argument that the agrarian milieu experiences proletarianization in the urban hemisphere. The peasantry share decreases from 35.7% to 9.91%, increasing from 32.87% to 56.9%. %44.7 of the current informal proletariat and 32.7% of the current formal manual proletariat have the peasantry's class origins a generation ago. The formal non-manual proletariat, as mentioned above, shows characteristics of both proletarian classes and higher tiers of social stratification, with 30.4% of their domain. On the other side, the thesis employs the concept of "broad people's coalitions" via the combination of

proletarian and peasantry classes. 80% of the current proletarian classes are originally attached to broad people by growing up in either working class or peasantry families.

The descriptive pie charts support the argument that ethnic background triggers different class attachments. Elimination of agrarian classes forces the Kurds to integrate with the informal economy more than the non-Kurds. The share of professionals and formal-non-manual working class from peasantry-originated families is much less among the Kurds. By lodging a statement of opposition, the thesis supports that the migrant Kurds from rural constitutes the supply of the Industrial Reserve Army in the urban labor market; however, such an argument requires a more methodologically robust and theoretically synthesized analysis rather than descriptive analysis statistics. Overall, the impact of ethnicity could be observed in different class-related statistics, from origins to destinations, proletarianization rates, and informalization rates, strongly signaling the expected divergence among the two populations.

**ETHNICITY, CLASS, AND PROTEST: THE EFFECT OF CLASS ORIGINS,  
DESTINATIONS, MOBILITY AND ETHNICITY ON PROTEST BEHAVIORS IN  
TURKEY**



### **Introduction and the Novel Contribution to the Literature**

This thesis chapter explores class origins, class destination, and class mobility on Turkey's protest participation. The thesis aims to position itself at the intersection between social movement studies and the mobility research. Theoretically, it will be nourished by the former social movements scholars to understand the historical mechanisms of social mobilization. Methodologically, it will present the history of mobility research and employ the most convenient mobility research method, the *Diagonal Reference Modelling* (Sobel 1981; 1985).

Although previous studies on class, Kurdish identity, and protest participation is relatively well-established, none of the studies provides a robust analysis of class mobility's effect on protest participation. Qualitative studies decipher the portray of the class-ethnicity-mobilization nexus and on-the-ground causes of protest participation (Özkirimli 2014; Watts 2010; Atak and Bayram 2017; Z. F. Yörük 2016). Nevertheless, these studies are far from estimating intergenerational class mobility's effect on protest participation; instead, they focus on presenting complex intersection puzzles and mechanisms. This thesis is one of the few quantitative studies on class and protest participation in Turkey, but it also integrates the mechanisms of intergenerational class mobility on social mobilization. In that sense, the thesis' novelty stems from a theoretical invitation for scholars to further discuss the effect of intergenerational class mobility with its specific methodologic endeavor. By providing the results of Diagonal Reference Models for the whole population and the Kurds, the chapter aims at testing two hypotheses of the following:

*Hypothesis 1:* The class origins, destinations, and mobility do not significantly affect protest participation in Turkey due to higher variances among the population in terms of class position and protest behaviors.

*Hypothesis 2:* When the sample is restricted by the Kurds, the class origins, destinations, and mobility have a significant effect, where class mobility results in an

antagonistic relationship with the protest participation due to the predominant attainment of Kurds to the lower fragments of the population as well as a historical tendency of Kurds to mobilize politically.

The dependent variable estimated is the binary variable indicating whether the informant has previously participated in a **protest**. The explanatory variables, **class origins**, and **destinations** are 8-scale class schema provided by Hoffmann and Portes (Portes and Hoffman 2003), specified previously. **Class mobility** is the difference between origins and destination levels. The covariates for the specific model are as follows: the male is the binary variable of the informant's gender identity; age indicates the informants' age. **Education** is an ordinary variable from 1 to 7; 1 represents illiteracy, 2 literates without a diploma, 3 primary school diplomas, 4 middle-school diplomae, 5 high-school diplomas, 6 undergraduate diplomae, and 7 graduate school diplomas. **Trade Union** is a binary variable indicating the informant's unionization and **social assistance** indicate whether the informant previously received any social assistance. **Migration** is the binary variable representing the migration status of informants, and **deprivation** is a Likert-scale ordinary variable indicating the answers to the question "In the past two years, how could you position the household's overall income level and welfare?" by 1 being very bad and 5 being very good. **Ideology** is a 5-scale ordinary variable from 1 representing left and 5 representing right. **Alevi** is a binary variable indicating whether the informant is Alevi, and **religiosity** is a 4-scale variable from 1 with no faith to 4 with highly faithful. **PDP** is a binary variable indicating whether the informant would vote for the Halkların Demokratik Partisi (People's Democratic Party—PDP) in today's parliamentary elections.

The covariates are chosen based on the criteria covered by the past research, which is also supposed to affect individuals' class position or political mobilization attitudes. Past research provided empirical evidence on the relationship between unionization and protest

behaviors (Elbert 2015; Upchurch and Mathers 2012; Dutchak 2015). Contemporary literature on migration examines how migration status influences individuals' political behaviors and mobilization preferences (Strijbis 2015; Mégret 2018)). Few notable studies among politics of welfare studies scrutinize the relationship between social assistance provision and political mobilization in the Global South (E. Yörük 2012b; E. Yörük and Gençer 2020; E. Yörük, Öker, and Şarlak 2019; Zarate Tenorio 2014). The triangulation of class-ideological penetration-protest behaviors has been widely discussed in Turkish and global contexts, whether through the party or grassroots politics. In the Turkish context, religious denomination, characterized as an Alevi, and political mobilization behaviors ensued relate to each other, which the model specified controls. The model estimates protest participation behaviors in Turkey by controlling theoretically well-established covariates, which would shape the relationship between class mobility and protest participation.

## Results

Table 2 shows the DRM results of protest participation in Turkey. The results signal that the effect of class origins, destinations, and mobility are statistically insignificant on protest behaviors. Most of the covariates added to the model give insignificant results to estimate the likelihood of protest participation. The effect of class-related coefficients' insignificance could be because of the whole population's heterogeneity since the whole population provides more variance for all the covariates. Class origins, class destination, and class mobility give higher variances due to population heterogeneity in class composition. Therefore, the inconsistency in variances avoids observing a particular pattern; in other words, higher variances among observations complicate making significant interpretations. The insignificance of the variable of interests could be due to three primary reasons: (i) the effect of the explanatory variables does not have the explanatory capacity to capture the protests participation; (ii) in surveys with small sample sizes, the variances result much higher compared to the larger ones; hence,

increasing sample sizes with more data points to draw patterns of observations may foster to reach significant results; (iii) the model would require a certain level of restrictions in order to avoid the heterogeneity of the population. It restricts the Kurdish population since the thesis argues that the Kurds' class composition is relatively more homogenous by attaining predominantly to lower classes than the non-Kurdish population (C. Keyder 2005; Dinler 2016; Yilmaz 2008). The parallel between ethnicity and class position would provide the restrictions required and enable observing the relationship patterns between class and protests participation. If there is any, Table 2 provides significant results of covariances other than the class composition.

The relationship between educational background and protest participation is positive and significant, signaling a higher likelihood of participating in protests for higher education levels. Scholars argue that education increases individuals' life chances and provides more resources to mobilize; therefore, higher education levels increase the likelihood of protest participation (Sherkat and Blocker 1993; 1994; Dahlum 2019; Rodeghier, Hall, and Useem 1991). Being unionized has a positive effect on protest participation, as expected due to the power provided by getting organized. The scholars recognize the positive effect of possession of organized bargaining power and mobilization behaviors (Ahlquist 2012; Ashraf and Prentice 2019; Karan and Sakar 2000; Majka and Majka 1992; Rigakos and Ergul 2011). Migration, predominantly a rural-to-urban phenomenon in Turkey, positively affects mobilization attitudes. The relationship between migration, class position, and mobilization has been a well-established study area for an extended period. Those who confirm the positive relationship between migration and participating social movements prioritize discrimination against the migrants (Bilodeau 2008; Hamann and Türkmen 2020; Petrova 2021; Tolnay, Beck, and Sass 2018). In the Turkish context, religiosity has a strong negative impact on protest behaviors.

The parties of political Islam constitute one of the primary veins in Turkish political terrain. In 1970, Necmettin Erbakan founded the Milli Nizam Partisi (National Order Party—NOP), initiated the Milli Görüş Hareketi (National View Movement), and political Islam have got popular support from the masses afterward. For nearly two decades, another successor of political-Islamist ideology, the Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development Party—JDP), has been on duty. From its foundation days, political Islam has been one of the significant Turkish conservatism representatives, emphasizing and nostalgia for preserving Islam's values and norms. (Tuğal 2002, 93–94). Despite mobilizations during the 1970s and 1990s, mass political Islamists centralized preserving nostalgic values, maintaining social order, and conserving the existing norms. Therefore, the ideological penetration of religiosity and conservatism results in socially immobilized political behaviors. The results also show that voting for the pro-Kurdish party, Halkların Demokratik Partisi (People's Democratic Party—PDP), positively affects protest movements. PDP has consistently been a front-sider of left-wing, anti-repression political activism for nearly a decade. The results support that individuals who share the ideological penetration of the PDP are more likely to participate in protests.

**Table 2: Coefficients for the Class Origins, Destination and Mobility Estimates for Turkey (2019)<sup>v</sup>**

| Variables                     | Coefficients  |
|-------------------------------|---------------|
| Informal Proletariat          | 0.04 (0.02)** |
| Formal Manual Proletariat     | 0.08 (0.01)*  |
| Formal non-Manual Proletariat | -0.003 (0.05) |
| Professionals                 | 0.21 (0.08)   |
| Petty Bourgeoisie             | 0.13 (0.02)   |
| Executives                    | 0.21 (0.04)   |
| Capitalists                   | 0.28 (0.04)** |

|                                       |                 |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| p                                     | 1.58 (1.33)     |
| Informal Proletariat (Orig.)          | -0.01 (0.02)**  |
| Formal Manual Proletariat (Orig.)     | -0.03*          |
| Formal non-Manual Proletariat (Orig.) | 0.001 (0.05)    |
| Professionals (Orig.)                 | -0.08 (0.08)    |
| Petty Bourgeoisie (Orig.)             | -0.05 (0.02)    |
| Executives (Orig.)                    | -0.08 (0.04)    |
| Capitalist (Orig.)                    | -0.1 (0.04)**   |
| q                                     | -0.58 (1.34)    |
| Class Mobility                        | -0.025 (0.02)   |
| Male                                  | 0.007 (0.02)    |
| Age                                   | 0.0009 (0.001)  |
| Education                             | 0.04 (0.008)*** |
| Trade Union                           | 0.12 (0.03)**   |
| Social Assistance                     | 0.005 (0.02)    |
| Migration                             | 0.04 (0.02)**   |
| Deprivation                           | 0.01 (0.01)     |
| Alevi                                 | 0.07 (0.05)     |
| Ideology                              | 0.002 (0.001)   |
| Religiosity                           | -0.049 (0.01)** |
| PDP                                   | 0.15 (0.05)**   |
| Log Pseudolikelihood                  | -630.427        |
| N                                     | 1,587           |

SOURCE: KONDA BAROMETER SURVEY, SOCIAL POLICY MODULE (2019)

Table 3 represents the results of the Diagonal Reference Model when the Kurdish population restricts the model. Similar to studies that divide Eastern and Western Europe in quantitative analysis, the thesis does not refrain from dividing Turkey's population into two to reach more robust conclusions. The results show that the effect of class destination on protest participation is statistically significant versus class origins for the Kurds. The parameter  $p$  is statistically significant by a magnitude of 0.73, from which we could infer that the effect of class destination on protest is nearly triple times higher than the effect of class origins for the Kurds. The critical variable of interest, class mobility, negatively affects protest participation, meaning that upward mobility decreases the likelihood of protest participation, whereas downward mobility increases the likelihood of participating in protests for the Kurds. At this point, it is essential to underline the effect of class mobility: for small sample sizes like this model, the variances would be much larger, avoiding capturing statistically significant coefficients. This model promises much from this point of view: despite the small sample size, class mobility is negatively significant for the Kurds; hence, it would be wise to expect more robust results when the sample size increases. The results on class mobility and protest participation for the Kurds are not only a novel contribution to the social movement literature and mobility research, but they also invite scholars to go further and employ more robust quantitative research with larger sample sizes.

Another striking outcome of the model for the Kurdish population could be observed in education. Unlike the whole Turkish population, the relationship between educational attainment and protest participation is insignificant for the Kurds. Unionisation and religiosity levels show parallels with the aggregate population; unionization positively affects protest participation, probably via strikes, whereas religiosity negatively affects the Kurdish population's protest behaviors. Migration status is also positively significant for the Kurds. Those who are migrants are more likely to participate than those who are not migrants among

Kurds. The complex effect of migration, ethnicity, and class on protest participation requires a more comprehensive approach. However, for this model, the positive impact of being a migrant on the likelihood of participating in protests for the Kurdish population could probably be explained by the same reasons that explain the migration status for the aggregate population. The urban sphere offers more opportunities and resources for Kurds to mobilize, controlling for the class origins, destinations, and mobility levels. Despite Kurds' attainment to lower classes in the urban sphere, market pressure to get informalized, and lack of organized bargaining power, the predominant tendency of rural-to-urban migration results in the same consequences: being a migrant increases the likelihood of participating in protests, and the Kurds are no exception.

**Table 3: Coefficients for the Class Origins, Destinations and Mobility Estimates for the Kurds (2019)**

| Variables                             | Coefficients    |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Informal Proletariat                  | -0.07 (0.07)**  |
| Formal Manual Proletariat             | 0.04 (0.01)**   |
| Formal non-Manual Proletariat         | -0.12 (0.05)*** |
| Professionals                         | 0.34 (0.23)     |
| Petty Bourgeoisie                     | -0.03 (0.07)*** |
| Executives                            | 0.46 (0.14)***  |
| Capitalists                           | 0.37 (0.19)*    |
| p                                     | 0.73 (0.26)**   |
| Informal Proletariat (Orig.)          | -0.02 (0.07)*** |
| Formal Manual Proletariat (Orig.)     | -0.01 (0.1)**   |
| Formal non-Manual Proletariat (Orig.) | -0.04 (0.08)*** |
| Professionals (Orig.)                 | 0.120.23)       |

|                           |                  |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| Petty Bourgeoisie (Orig.) | -0.01 (0.007)*** |
| Executives (Orig.)        | 0.17 (0.14)***   |
| Capitalist (Orig.)        | 0.14 (0.19)*     |
| q                         | 0.27 (0.26)      |
| Class Mobility            | -0.021 (0.01)*   |
| Male                      | 0.007 (0.04)     |
| Age                       | 0.003 (0.002)*   |
| Education                 | 0.02 (0.02)      |
| Trade Union               | 0.29 (0.13)**    |
| Social Assistance         | 0.01 (0.05)      |
| Migration                 | 0.121 (0.04)***  |
| Deprivation               | 0.007 (0.03)     |
| Alevi                     | -0.19 (0.12)     |
| Ideology                  | 0.04 (0.02)*     |
| Religiosity               | -0.06 (0.04)     |
| PDP                       | 0.163 (0.06)**   |
| Log Pseudolikelihood      | -65.554          |
| N                         | 245              |

SOURCE: KONDA BAROMETER SURVEY, SOCIAL POLICY MODULE (2019)

## Conclusion

This thesis chapter provides empirical results of class and class mobility's effect on protest participation. Table 2 is on the Turkish population, whereas Table 3 shows the outcomes of the same model employed in Table 2 with restrictions based on the ethnic background by subdividing the sample into the Kurdish population. The results confirm the two hypotheses: (i) the effect of class origins, destination, and mobility does not have a significant effect on

protest participation for the whole population, and (ii) the effect of the explanatory variables on protest participation is significant when the Kurdish population restricts the sample. Parallel with these hypotheses, while higher education results in a higher likelihood of protest participation for the whole Turkish population, it is vice versa when the Kurds restrict the model. Given that education constitutes one of the primary drivers of social mobility, the negative relationship between class mobility and the Kurds' protest participation is supported since higher education leads to upward mobility and less likelihood to participate in protests. Being a migrant, detailed in the next chapter, consistently positively affects protest participation. While getting unionized and voting for PDP positively affect the likelihood to participate in protests, increasing religiosity decreases protest participation.

The divergent results of the Kurds sound novel but expected. Nearly in all statistics, from fertility rates to class position, voting behaviors, income, and education levels, the Kurds are divergent from Turkey's population. It, therefore, signals a careful reconsideration of more prominent mechanisms of ethnic discrimination that could only be elaborated by contextualizing the national and international political-economic sphere. Consistent migration of the Kurds from Eastern rural to the Western metropolises and market pressures accelerating downward mobility by proletarianization and informalization invite scholars to propose a more sophisticated theoretical approach with robust methodological employment. If so, what could be the comprehensive explanations? These questions require a historical political-economic analysis of national and international context. Possible mechanisms may include the effect of ongoing civil war in Eastern Turkey for nearly four decades and increasing resources via urban migration.

Further research may centralize around the political opportunity/structure mechanisms that will enable Kurdish mobilization: the existence of pro-Kurdish political organizations for at least four decades may positively affect Kurdish mobilization's organizational capacity.

Those nourished by the deprivation theories may address Kurds' grievances and deprivation of valued resources. However, as this thesis argues, Kurdish mobilization's possible explanations stem from larger class systems, interests, and coalitions. Global neoliberal structuring with the local historical context adjusts how social classes interact in Turkey, where the Kurds historically and predominantly attached to lower fragments of social stratification. The thesis recognizes the effect of possible causes beneath Kurdish protest behaviors from organizational capacity to intercourse with the ongoing civil war; however, the thesis emphasizes that class cleavage is still alive in shaping the Kurds' protest attitudes.



**MIGRATION INCLUDED: EXPLAINING PROTEST PARTICIPATION IN  
TURKEY**



### **Introduction and the Global Political Economy of the Kurdish Migration**

The thesis chapter aims to frame the mechanisms behind political mobilization that shape class origins, class destinations, and class mobility for the Kurds in Turkey. The previous chapter has presented that class mobility is significantly negative on protest participation when the sample is restricted to the Kurds, but it does not significantly affect the whole population. This chapter seeks to complete the existing puzzle by examining the effect of migration and party vote preferences, voting for the pro-Kurdish People's Democratic Party. The reason behind examining migration and party vote preferences is that they shape the existing class structure (migration) or directly affect political mobilization preferences (party vote preferences). The chapter presents two different diagonal reference models for the restricted population: the first includes an interaction term that multiplies class mobility and migration status, and the second model controls the first by adding the party vote preferences.

The Eastern regions, predominantly Kurdish population, have been systematically pushed back within the Turkish social stratification. In most descriptive statistics, the Eastern regions and the Kurds show a drastic divergence within Turkey's social hierarchies. Beyond this, ongoing civil war has fueled the region's impoverishment, forced migration, and further politicization through rural guerilla warfare for four decades. However, the Kurdish issue goes beyond the politicization of the Kurds through civil war— it has century-long oppression through institutional, social, and cultural dimensions. Therefore, to infer meaningful conclusions, the thesis aims to portray the historical sociology of the Kurdish issue within the global-political economic context. The divergence between the East and the West in Turkey overlaps with migration theories, explaining push- and pull factors. Examining migration enables the recognition that it shapes the existing class structure or directly affects political mobilization preferences.

Previous scholars observed the relationship between class mobility and migration by examining further push- and pull factors to explain the material conditions (Azhar 2020; Liu-

Farrer 2016; Oliver and O'Reilly 2010; Van Hear 2006; 2014). In Turkey, new premises of neoliberal capitalism lead to the abolition of pre-1980s mega developmental projects, which primarily target the Eastern regions due to the economic gap with the Western regions (Onis 2010). The development of Eastern regions is not a 5-decade-old concern that could be reduced to ongoing civil war: in the first decades of the Republic, the president Mustafa Kemal established the Elektrik Etüdları İdaresi (—Electrical Works Study Administration) in 1935 in order to produce electricity from the Tigris and the Euphrates. After World War II and the proliferation of developmental projects under the Keynesian import-substitution economic paradigm, the development of the Eastern regions becomes a state policy. After the 1960 coup d'état and the following Constitution accelerated the interest in development projects with state's high intervention to the macroeconomy by establishing Kamu İktisadi Teşebbüsleri (State Economic Enterprises) and Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı (State Planning Organization). The concern regarding the economic development of Eastern regions took its most concrete steps with Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi (Southeastern Anatolia Project) with a comprehensive policy agenda that targets agricultural irrigation, transportation, urban and rural infrastructure, industry, education, and health. The massive primal dams in the region started to be constructed in 1965 with the Keban Dam and continued afterward. Despite the developmental projects, the economic gap between the East and the West still forced internal Kurds to migrate from the East to the West.

The high intervention of the state into the economic activities increased the government debt and put inflationary pressure on the Turkish Lira during the 1970s (Arıcanlı 1990). Following the 1960 Constitution, regarded as the most egalitarian constitution in Turkey, people get the right to strike and collective bargaining. The organizational capacity of workers forced to increase an upward trend in wages, and this period intersects with the Golden Age of Capitalism, where workers experience mobility upward and become middle-class members

(Goldthorpe et al. 1969). During this period, left-wing politics enjoy its hay days with solid support from the grassroots. Starting from the French student protests, left-wing politics, including labor unions, grassroots organizations, political parties, and armed organizations, have solid transformative power over the policies. Left-wing politics obtain an associational power over the production processes and resembles a political alternative for the masses. During the 1970s, the clashes between left-wing and right-wing politics turn into massive violent events in Turkey. The consequence of the 1970s is that an unstable political atmosphere with short-period coalition governments.

Apart from the internal context, the global economy suffered from the oil shock in 1973 during the 1970s. OPEC countries responded with an embargo on oil supply to the developing countries due to the US's support for Israel against four Arab counties during the 1973 Yom Kippur Arab-Israeli War. The inflationary pressure due to the increasing oil prices sharpened the economic dilemmas of the Golden Age of Capitalism and the developmentalist paradigm. High wages of workers with reliable associational power, increasing support for the left-wing politics, existing state-owned enterprises, and an unstable political atmosphere in Turkey reached their limit to compensate for the dilemmas. The last hit was from the OPEC countries, which increases the production costs, increases the prices, and ultimately results in high inflation rates. Thus, the Golden Age of Capitalism can no longer compensate for dilemmas, and a new economic paradigm is required to overcome the crisis.

Around the 1980s, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the World Bank (WB) introduced a reform package to overcome the crisis in the developing world. This new reform package with ten principles constitutes the pillars of neoliberal capitalism. The model first targeted the Latin American countries and spread all over the developing countries during the 1980s, including Turkey. The new paradigm aims to suppress the high inflation and decrease the government debt with robust fiscal

discipline, privatization of state-owned enterprises, liberalization of trade and foreign direct investments, and deregulation. In Turkey, the 1980 coup d'etat and junta regime re-arranged the political atmosphere to execute the Washington Consensus: it nearly finished all social unrest of left-wing movements by imprisoning or executing the political actors and shutting down organizations. Thus, the junta regime uses violence and force to end the left-right clashes with nearly no opposition between 1980-1983 and opens up space to employ neoliberal principles.

The new economic paradigm drastically transforms larger class systems by changing the motives of groups. The new economic paradigm imposes a 'minimal state' in the economy by privatizing state-owned enterprises. The early attempts of the Anavatan Partisi (Motherland Party) on behalf of privatization, financialization of the capital, and deregulation could only be completed during the 2000s with the Justice and Development Party government. The JDP government substantiates massive privatizations with a relatively strong fiscal discipline in the early 2000s, called 'regulatory neoliberalism' or 'post-Washington Consensus'. The premises of the new paradigm accelerated the abolishment of the developmental projects, including those that target the Eastern regions of Turkey. From the 1980s, there were still massive migration waves from the rural East to the urban West. Shutting down the oppositional labor unions leave the workers in harsh market conditions and, consequently, puts downward pressure on the wages (Boratav 1990). Migrant workers compose new settlement areas in the urban metropolises with no strict regulation. New urban spaces lack infrastructure, have limited access to health, education, and jobs, and ultimately create mega slums.

Slums of the West urban are the new settlement zones of the migrant workers, who were previously peasants in the rural East and supply cheap labor to the urban economy. The new economic paradigm divides the production into micro-processes using an extensive subcontracting system (Bozkurt 2013; E. Yörük 2006a). While the workers work in large

factories with high wages, right to strike, and right to collective bargaining before the 1980s, it shifts to a new production chain, where workers work in small ateliers in small groups with low wages and less associational bargaining power (E. Yörük 2006b; Kiray 1990). De-unionized and de-formalized proletarian classes constitute the reserve army of the urban economy for more profitable productions. The 1980s accelerated the transformation of past peasants into today's informal workers by using an extensive subcontracting system. The thesis presents descriptive statistics on the current class positions of the peasants in the previous generations and the previous class origins of the current informal proletariat.

Within this context, rural-to-urban migration helps to comprehend the puzzle. From the early years of the Republic, the development of Eastern regions is a state-targeted policy since the gap between the East and the West forces people to migrate to obtain more economic resources. The abolishment of the mega projects, pressure on wages, lack of access to consistent infrastructure, health, and education increases the pressure upon people to migrate, where the new economic paradigm deepens and accelerates further. Beyond this, migrant workers, mainly the Kurds, experience ethnic discrimination, which puts extra downward pressure on the wages in the urban markets.

Apart from the economic reasons, the ongoing civil war is a crucial push factor for Kurdish migration. Since the early 1980s, the Kurdistan Worker's Party (*Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan—PKK*) has initiated a Kurdish uprising in the Eastern regions of Turkey. State armies burned and evacuated more than 3,000 villages during this period and employed an internal displacement policy to avoid the growing support for the PKK. Unfortunately, the data does not capture the exact number of internally displaced migrants. Yörük (2012) estimated the number of internally displaced people as 2.8 million, one-quarter of the Kurdish population during the 1990s (E. Yörük 2012a). The massive internal displacement gives a shock impulse to rural-to-urban migration, particularly the Kurdish migration.

All these conditions invite us to rethink the model in this thesis by examining the migration vector. Massive migration waves change the overall class structure: migrants mobilize upwardly and downwardly in social stratification, affecting protest participation's perspectives and attitudes. Therefore, the thesis regards migration within a two-dimensional framework: (i) the direct effect of migration on the protest participation attitudes, and (ii) the indirect effect of migration through class mobility. As expected, migration could foster specific class mobilization patterns, resulting in different protest participation behaviors. In order to detect this, model 3 estimates the interaction term by the multiplication of class mobility levels and binary migration status variables.

The second model controls the effect of voting for the pro-Kurdish party, the People's Democratic Party on protest participation. As a pro-activist and pro-Kurdish party, voting for the PDP could foster political mobilization apart from the effect of class and migration. Under the conditions where few oppositional organizations and unions remain, the PDP offers an alternative political discourse and agenda that appreciates political mobilization. By combining the historical sociology of rural to urban migration, adjustments in the economic paradigm, and the organizational capacity of the pro-Kurdish party, the model presents the effect of class, including the effect of origins, destinations, and mobility, as well as an interaction term and the voting for the PDP:

### Model and Results

Model 3 is a diagonal reference model that attempts to capture the effect of class mobility and the interaction term derived by the multiplication of class mobility and binary migration status variable, apart from the effect of the particular vector of covariates. The explanatory variables are the same as the variables used in the models of the previous chapter, except for the interaction term. Thus, the new model could be formulated as:

$$\text{Model 3: } \text{Protest}_{idom} = p\delta_d \text{dest}_{id} + (1-p)\omega_o \text{orig}_{io} + \gamma_m \text{mob}_{im} + \theta_{is} \text{migration} * \text{mob}_{im} + \beta' X_i + \varepsilon_i$$

with parameters  $\delta_d$  for class destinations  $\mathbf{d}$ ,  $\omega_o$  for class origins  $\mathbf{o}$ ,  $\gamma_m$  for mobility levels  $\mathbf{m}$ ,  $\theta_{is}$  for the interaction term indicating the multiplication of migration status and mobility levels.  $X_i$  is a vector of covariates, and  $\varepsilon_i$  is the idiosyncratic error term.

Table 4 presents the DRM results of Model 3. The coefficients presented in the class and class origins sections are the absolute magnitude of the class positions on the protest participation with respect to class VIII, the peasantry. The p parameter, indicating the effect of class destination relative to the class destination, is statistically significant at a 99% confidence interval by a magnitude of 0.731. In contrast, the q parameter (1-p), the parameter of class origins, does not give statistically significant results. This result shows a parallel with model 2 in Chapter II. The effect of migration is still positive and significant, suggesting that migrants are more likely to protest than the non-migrants among the Kurds.

**Table 4: Coefficients for the Class Origins, Destinations, Mobility and Interaction Estimates for Kurds Only (2019)**

| Variables                             | Coefficients       |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Informal Proletariat                  | -0.173 (0.073)***  |
| Formal Manual Proletariat             | -0.046 (0.104)*    |
| Formal non-Manual Proletariat         | -0.151 (0.083)***  |
| Professionals                         | 0.31 (0.235)       |
| Petty Bourgeoisie                     | -0.069 (0.0654)*** |
| Executives                            | 0.249 (0.142)***   |
| Capitalists                           | 0.361 (0.196)**    |
| p                                     | 0.731 (0.22)***    |
| Informal Proletariat (Orig.)          | -0.035 (0.073)***  |
| Formal Manual Proletariat (Orig.)     | -0.017 (0.104)***  |
| Formal non-Manual Proletariat (Orig.) | -0.055 (0.083)***  |

|                           |                  |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| Professionals (Orig.)     | 0.114 (0.23)     |
| Petty Bourgeoisie (Orig.) | -0.025 (0.06)*** |
| Executives (Orig.)        | 0.092 (0.14)***  |
| Capitalist (Orig.)        | 0.133 (0.2)**    |
| q                         | 0.269 (0.25)     |
| Class Mobility            | -0.0002 (0.11)   |
| Male                      | -0.048 (0.02)    |
| Age                       | 0.002 (0.001)    |
| Education                 | 0.016 (0.008)    |
| Trade Union               | 0.290 (0.03)**   |
| Social Assistance         | 0.019 (0.02)     |
| Migration                 | 0.171 (0.02)***  |
| Deprivation               | 0.002 (0.01)     |
| Alevi                     | -0.281 (0.05)*   |
| Ideology                  | 0.002 (0.001)    |
| Religiosity               | -0.083 (0.01)    |
| Class Mobility*Migration  | -0.039*          |
| Log Pseudolikelihood      | -71.857          |
| N                         | 254              |

SOURCE: KONDA BAROMETER SURVEY, SOCIAL POLICY MODULE (2019)

Unlike model 2, class mobility is negative and insignificant, with a minimal magnitude, whereas the interaction term has a significant adverse effect on the protest behaviors in model 3. These results suggest that class mobility is only significant for the migrant Kurds. The underlying mechanism behind this result could be as follows: the peasant Kurds in the rural

East migrate to the urban slums and are formally or informally proletarianized. As a result, compared to their previous settlements in the rural countryside, the migrant Kurds experience certain levels of upward class mobility in the urban space. However, it is essential to remember that the Kurdish population in the Western metropolises predominantly live in mega slums with less infrastructural investments, less access to job markets, health, and education services. Therefore, migrant Kurds who experience upward class mobility do not enjoy better life chances of urban life. Instead, the social network and cultural capital of the settlers of the slum put glass ceilings, avoiding them to manifest their upward mobility. Furthermore, many migrant Kurds encounter ethnic discrimination in urban social life and job market, struggle with insecure work conditions, and afford their lives with low wages. All these conditions prevent the migrant Kurds from being politically active and decrease the likelihood to participate in protests despite the upward class mobility.

The urban space in the Western metropolises strictly resembles Turkey's uneven distribution of resources and life chances. While higher classes enjoy the urban social life, gain more economic resources in highly valued jobs and businesses, and live in neighborhoods with similar lives, lower classes live in slums in the peripheries where they receive less access to economic resources, social life, education, and health. Moreover, small ateliers' micro-production processes prevent them from getting organized against long working hours with no social security and low payments. In other words, life in the slums strongly impedes political mobilization: migrant Kurds do not possess time to participate in protests and economic, cultural, and social capitals. They also do not enjoy the urban social life, affecting their political behaviors, such as encountering different activists. All these conditions result in a negative relationship between class mobility and participation in protests for the Kurds.

### **Limitations and the Effect of the PDP**

Technically, the class schema employed in this thesis and the model regards proletarianization from peasantry as an instance of upward mobility, regardless of the sub-classes under the proletariat (e.g., the informal proletariat, formal manual proletariat, and formal non-manual proletariat). Therefore, the previous peasants in the countryside migrated to the urban metropolises, and proletarianized are coded as experiences of upward mobility unless they are still occupationally in the agrarian milieu. However, the on-the-ground effects do not successfully reflect this upward mobility. The class schema employed in this thesis offers an analytical distinction among the peasantry and proletarian classes. Most studies prefer to diverge urban classes from agrarian classes if the data does not permit (Erikson, Goldthorpe, and Portocarero 1979b) since it is theoretically challenging to rank the agrarian and proletarian classes hierarchically.

However, the International Standard Classification of Occupation (ISCO-08 Structure, index correspondence with ISCO-88) positions agrarian laborers below the proletarian classes ('ISCO - International Standard Classification of Occupations' n.d.). In this study, the class schema positions peasantry at the bottom of social stratification, even lower than the informal proletarian classes. The analytical cleavage provided by this hierarchical class schema allows us to increase sample sizes and analyze the whole population. Even though the thesis acknowledges that the class schema employed in this study could be theoretically problematic, it could be tolerated because it allows us to increase sample sizes with fewer variances while enables examining the aggregate class profiles in Turkey. The official ILO classification also recognizes agrarian classes' issues and ranks them at the bottom of social stratification. Given that the literature is relatively limited in explaining the protest behaviors by class mobility, the research aims to contribute to the intersection between social movement studies and mobility research in Turkey.

The research presents the result of the model with the PDP binary variable because it may affect political participation behaviors among Kurds. The organizational capacity of the pro-activist/pro-Kurdish PDP could adjust the general pattern that is observed between class and protest participation among Kurds. Therefore, it is crucial to control the PDP's effect on protest participation on protest attitudes.

**Table 5: Coefficients for the Class Origins, Destinations, Mobility, Interaction, and Voting Preference Estimates for Kurds Only (2019)**

| Variables                             | Coefficients       |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Informal Proletariat                  | -0.082 (0.073)***  |
| Formal Manual Proletariat             | -0.048 (0.104)**   |
| Formal non-Manual Proletariat         | -0.12 (0.083)***   |
| Professionals                         | 0.316 (0.235)      |
| Petty Bourgeoisie                     | -0.045 (0.0654)*** |
| Executives                            | 0.441 (0.142)***   |
| Capitalists                           | 0.429 (0.196)**    |
| p                                     | 0.704 (0.257)***   |
| Informal Proletariat (Orig.)          | -0.034 (0.073)***  |
| Formal Manual Proletariat (Orig.)     | -0.02 (0.104)**    |
| Formal non-Manual Proletariat (Orig.) | -0.051 (0.083)***  |
| Professionals (Orig.)                 | 0.133 (0.23)       |
| Petty Bourgeoisie (Orig.)             | -0.019 (0.06)***   |
| Executives (Orig.)                    | 0.177 (0.14)***    |
| Capitalist (Orig.)                    | 0.162 (0.196)**    |
| q                                     | 0.296 (0.257)      |
| Class Mobility                        | -0.006             |

|                          |                  |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| Male                     | -0.071 (0.0115)  |
| Age                      | 0.0035 (0.001)   |
| Education                | 0.023 (0.008)    |
| Trade Union              | 0.292 (0.03)**   |
| Social Assistance        | 0.017 (0.02)     |
| Migration                | 0.153 (0.02)***  |
| Deprivation              | 0.005 (0.01)     |
| Alevi                    | -0.202 (0.05)*   |
| Ideology                 | 0.029 (0.001)    |
| Religiosity              | -0.061 (0.01)    |
| PDP                      | 0.157 (0.05)***  |
| Class Mobility*Migration | -0.0306 (0.0208) |
| Log Pseudolikelihood     | -64.397          |
| N                        | 245              |

SOURCE: KONDA BAROMETER SURVEY, SOCIAL POLICY MODULE (2019)

Table 5 represents the results of the diagonal reference model, which controls the effect of voting for PDP among Kurds. PDP is a binary variable representing the individuals who vote for the PDP if there is a general election today. The table shows that the p parameter is still significant at a 99% confidence interval by a magnitude of 0.704, whereas the q parameter stays insignificant. Thus, it shows that the relative importance of class destination over class origins in determining protest attitudes is still observable among the Kurds. However, From the 1980s and following adjustment in the national and global economic systems, pro-Kurdish political activism constitutes a strong pillar of social movements in Turkey. Therefore, the organizational capacity supported by the pro-activist PDP could easily affect the dependent variable, deviating from the effect of other covariates, including class and class mobility.

## Conclusion

The thesis chapter aims to portray the puzzle between class, migration, ethnicity, and protest participation in Turkey as of 2019. It deciphers the anatomy of protest participation behaviors in Turkey regarding mobility and migration status. This chapter supports two main hypotheses by employing the methods of mobility research and synthesizing the historical analysis with empirical evidence. First, the relationship between class mobility and protest participation is negatively significant for the migrant Kurds in Turkey. Second, the effect of the PDP voting preference is strongly positively correlated with protest participation for the Kurds; therefore, the strong correlation between protest participation and voting for the PDP avoids the influence of other related covariates. Table 5 shows the results of class mobility and class mobility\*migration status interaction variable, which are significant, whereas migrant Kurds and PDP voter Kurds are more likely to participate in protests.

The historical sociology of the Kurdish issue and the changes in the economic paradigm from the early days of the republic drastically transform how the Turkish state frames the social stratification disparity between the East and West. In the Turkish context, the economy suffers from the inflationary pressure on the Turkish Lira due to high public deficits, high wages due to the bargaining power of the proletarian classes, and blue-collar activism during the 1960s. Plus, left-right clashes and short-term governments created an unstable political atmosphere in the 1970s. During this era, the global economy went into an economic crisis due to the oil shock in 1973, increasing production costs and putting even more inflationary pressure on the currencies. These developments consequently deepen the existing dilemmas of global capitalism and ultimately leave the developmentalist economic paradigm. The 1980s are the first steps of export-oriented-growth strategies rather than import-substitution models with the policies encouraging privatizations, deregulations, free trade, and the state's "minimal role" in the economy. While capital moves globally in search of more profitable production chains, the

migrant Kurds in the slums of the West metropolises transform significant suppliers of cheap labor to urban Turkey.

The ongoing civil war and ethnic discrimination, and the class changes mentioned above of Kurds invite us to reframe the puzzle behind the political mobilization in Turkey. As expected, class position and class mobility are essential vectors of protest participation behaviors in Turkey for the Kurds. However, migration and internal displacement mechanisms deeply influence social stratification, and the examination of migration is required to comprehend the general framework. For this reason, the interaction term by the multiplication of class mobility levels and migration status is controlled and gives significant adverse results. It shows that increasing mobility results in less participation in protests for the migrant Kurds and vice versa.

Regarding the organizational capacity of pro-activist/pro-Kurdish PDP, the study recognizes the limits of the model presented. The voting preference of the Kurds deeply affects the protest participation behaviors. In model 4, we observe that only voting for the PDP and being a migrant give statistically significant results due to the PDP's high correlation with the protest participation among Kurds. While the thesis recognizes PDP's massive impact on the protest participation behaviors among Kurds, it also does not refrain from removing the PDP variable from the model to avoid the multicollinearity problem.

In conclusion, the chapter does not only aim to synthesize the political-economic context with methods of mobility research fruitfully, but it also invites scholars to go further and recognize the effect of intergenerational class mobility on protest behaviors attitudes. While looking for the effect of class and class mobility, the possible divergences that may shape the relationship should not be dismissed. In this regard, migration and internal displacement force households to experience class mobility effects, necessitating examining its transformative power over class positioning. On the other hand, the voting preference of the

Kurds adjusts the protest participation behaviors. In Turkey, voting for the PDP is a positive indicator of protest participation among Kurds. This finding also invites scholars to engage more with the political parties' class positions to produce theoretically nourished studies.



## CONCLUSION



This thesis is based on quantitative research on the class-protest relationship in Turkey. The protest participation behaviors depend on multiple factors within which the thesis relies on the household-level data; in other words, it is more of a micro-analysis of protest attitudes based on the class dynamics. The thesis acknowledges that existing literature overlooks class—social class is a combination of familial class origins, current class destination, and the mobility levels between origins and destinations. Therefore, studies prioritizing only origins or destinations would be theoretically limited and methodologically biased. This thesis aims to position itself at this intersection—a protest analysis that is intensely nourished by the methods and approaches of mobility research. While class and class-related explanations have sharply disappeared from the protest analysis during the last decades, there is no comprehensive mobility research on the relationship between class mobility and protest participation behaviors. In this sense, none of the schools provide a comprehensive theoretical framework that explains the complex relationship. Current social movements research focuses on case studies of specific movements, e.g., Gezi Park Protest, Occupy Movements, Indignados, and the Arab Spring. Although most of these studies' bring capitalism into the protest analysis' and notice the disappearance of class, recent quantitative scholarship has shown limited interest in protest analysis. Moreover, the thesis contributes to a specific class-protest relationship in Turkey, of which few studies focus on mobility aspects.

Social class is a slow-changing phenomenon that may not give meaningful conclusions over a specified dependent variable in short periods. Even within a generation, 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of Turkey's total population stays immobile, neither downward nor upward mobility<sup>vi</sup>. Given that Turkey is a typical example of emerging economies, the glass ceiling and social class reproduction mechanisms adjust the class schemes, which results in hardly changing mobility patterns. Overall, changes within the social stratification are slowly moving—it takes a longer time for one to upgrade the living conditions and inherit them to the next generation. Education, which

is still the most prominent way for upward mobility, requires at least 15-year of endeavor. Therefore, observing the effect of social class requires an analysis of more extended periods in order to assess the effect of changing class positions. Otherwise, it could lead to a fragmental analysis of the social class effect—the specific effect of class position (including class origins) on a specified dependent variable at a given time. However, mobility research is interested in the effect of the changes in social class on a specific dependent variable; thus, it aims to capture the process.

The thesis also contributes to relatively left-wing class schemes. Rather than employing Erikson-Goldthorpe-Portocarero (EGP) and its extended version, European Socio-economic Classification (ESeC), developed versions of Weberian status groups, the thesis applies the class scheme provided by Portes & Hoffman. The advantage of the Portes & Hoffman class scheme is that it is specific to Latin American countries; thus, it is highly encompassing for the emerging economies and the Global South. It captures the divergences among working classes, including the divergence between the formal and informal proletariat. In this regard, I find Portes & Hoffman's class scheme best fits Turkey's class panorama, capturing the informality and manual and non-manual working classes so that we could reach more nuanced conclusions.

The thesis recognizes that participating in protest is a consequence of multiple factors, including global political-economic context and local experiences of grievances, opportunities, cultural, framing, and demographic factors. In this regard, while the thesis analyzes the effect of class mobility on social mobilization, it discusses ethnicity and migration as driver mechanisms. Changes in the global economic context after the 1980s, neoliberal restructuring of the economy, and proletarianization of the peasantry in the urban service sectors sharply adjust the social stratification in Turkey. In this regard, the Kurds in Turkey were the vulnerable masses against sharp changes within Turkish neoliberalism. Therefore, the thesis observes no

coincidence between the eruption of the Kurdish civil war and the adoption of neoliberalism in Turkey.

The adoption of the neoliberal paradigm has sharpened the existing discriminatory practices and policies by forcing the migrant Kurds to position as informal proletarians through which specific political opportunity/structures have engaged to give rise to the eruption of Kurdish political movements. Given that statistics and descriptive charts manifest the substantial divergence between the West and the East of Turkey, the thesis finds the reconsideration of class analysis regarding ethnic dimension vital to explain class and protest relationship. For this reason, by dividing Turkey's population as Kurdish and non-Kurdish, the thesis captures divergent protest behaviors of the Kurds in response to changes in class position within a generation.

From the 1960s onward, we observe a massive migration from rural to urban in Turkey. After the 1980s, Latin American model adaptation in Turkey and the erupted civil war triggered a second wave of mass migration from rural East to urban slums and ghettos in Western metropolises. Supplying the cheap labor in urban sectors, the Kurds experience proletarianization—with strong informalization, from the peasantry. The results show a differentiation of class-protest relationship for the Kurds; however, it still does not explain how these differences occur in macro-context. For this reason, migration status offers a theoretical framework that explains the puzzle between class and protest participation. The results show that the negative relationship between class mobility and protest participation is only significant among migrant Kurds.

The thesis employs Diagonal Reference Modelling for class mobility and protest relationship. The DRM is currently the most proper and convenient method for mobility research—it captures the effect of one unit of increase in mobility levels on a specified dependent variable with respect to the immobile. The theoretical and methodological

shortcoming of the mobility research invites us to rethink our conceptualization and operationalization of social class. Theoretically, the effect of the social class on specific dependent variables could not be reduced to only class destination and origins since the social class is a more complex relationship of production and employment through which the influence of the changes could only be observed in more extended timeframes. Hence, mobility research facilitates observing the effect of the changes in class positions among generations.

Methodologically, it is challenging to differentiate mobility from origins and destinations since mobility levels are the linear transformation of the origins and destinations; hence, they suffer from multicollinearity. Quantitative scholarship and the DRM render to capture the relative effect of one unit increase (or decrease) in mobility levels on a particular dependent variable. Without considering the effect of mobility, the effect of class origins (or destinations, depending on the research) would reflect the mobility impact and thus; be biased.

The thesis mainly divides the framework into three layers: (i) the class profiles in Turkey; (ii) the effect of class mobility on protest participation for the Kurds and the total population; (iii) the effect of migration in order to explain the significant negative relationship of class mobility and protest for the Kurds. The thesis presents the class profiling in Turkey for the primary reason of investigating the relationship between class and protest participation. Therefore, it is vital to be aware of Turkey's class destinations and origins. In order to achieve this, first, it presents a comprehensive Turkey's class profiles descriptive charts, including origins and destinations. Currently, 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of the whole population is composed of the lower strata of social stratification, including peasants and proletarians (formal manual, formal non-manual, and informal proletarians). Among this share, the peasantry is roughly 10% of the population and 15% of the lower stratum. The lower stratum comprised 74.1% of the total population in the previous generation, whereas the peasantry held 35.7%. The share of peasantry within the lower stratum was also 48.1%, with a sharp decrease to 15% within a

generation. The result signals us that most of the population experiences upward mobility from the peasantry. Beyond this, 81% of the proletarians were originally either proletarians or peasants, among which the share of the peasantry is 39%. We also observe that 20.1% of the formal non-manual proletarians, 32.7% of the formal-manual proletarians, and 44.2% of informal proletarians were grown-up peasant households. The pie charts also show that the Kurds experience proportionately 2.6 times higher informalization than non-Kurds, whereas 50% less formal non-manual proletarianization. While the Kurds were originally 65.9% peasants and informal proletarians (45.9% peasants and 19.9% informal proletarians), the non-Kurds were originally 42.9% peasants and informal proletarians (34% peasants and 7.9% informal proletarians).

This overall picture of Turkish class profiling shows us three primary outcomes: first, there is a sharp decrease in the peasantry and an increase in proletarianization from 48.1% of the lower stratum to 15%. While peasantry decreases, the fluidity flows to mass proletarian classes in the urban hemisphere and supplies cheap labor for the urban economy. Second, there is a significant flow of peasantry to informal working classes. Third, the Kurds experience a drastic informalization from the peasantry, whereas they have half of the chances than the non-Kurds to position within formal non-manual proletarians such as office assistants, secretariat, and white-collars (not executives). The descriptive pie charts strongly recommend the necessity to consider the ethnic dimension in class-related analysis in Turkey since there is significant divergence between the Kurds and the non-Kurds.

The results show that class mobility negatively affects protest participation for the Kurds, while there is no significant relationship for the total population in Turkey. The Eastern region has faced systematic push-down forces since the Republic's early years within the Turkish stratification. Especially post-1980 period and Washington Consensus led to the politicization of the existing class divergence when the Kurdish civil war erupted and mobilized

lower-stratum mass Kurds. Attainment to lower strata interacts with the remaining aspects of social and cultural life and leads to a critical vector that shapes the likelihood to participate in protests. Creating an unequal distribution of resources between the East and the West; as a result, we observe that class cleavage still matters for the Kurds, including the mobility aspects. From the opposite angle, we could also observe that the Kurds who experience upward mobility have less likelihood of participating in protests: the reason behind the Kurdish mobilization lies within the macroeconomic contradictions of the Turkish economy, which pushes the Kurds to the lower strata. Therefore, when Kurds achieve to upgrade living conditions and climb in social stratification, they seem to decline in participating in protests while they are more likely to participate in protest if they are pushed back to lower strata.

We could also argue that it is not only a matter of economic distribution within the Turkish macroeconomy. The central Anatolian and Eastern Blacksea regions have also experienced downward pressure within social stratification; however, they are not politically mobilized. Pro-Kurdish armed organizations, political parties, and grassroots organizations shape the mobilization patterns. Therefore, we should be aware of the local contingencies and opportunities/structures shaping the likelihood of participating in protests and political mobilization. During four decades, the Kurdish uprising has shifted the discourse from left-wing Marxism to radical democracy (Akkaya and Jongerden 2013). Despite the changes in ideological penetration of the Kurdish uprising, the class cleavage is still alive beneath the Kurds' mobilization. While a rural uprising in the Eastern region mobilized agrarian Kurds, contemporary movements mostly appear in the urban West by migrant Kurds whom different political parties and grassroots organizations mobilize. Despite the changes in the ideological framework of pro-Kurdish politics over decades, the relationship between class and protest among Kurds remains significant.

Chapter 3 reveals the results for the migration axis under the class-protest relationship for the Kurds. The thesis aims to portray a more refined picture under Kurdish mobilization by adding the migration status and class mobility term in the previous DRM model. The interaction term shifts the focus to migrant Kurds since class mobility turns insignificant, and the migration-class mobility interaction term has a negative and significant effect on protest participation. It reveals that class mobility is only significant for migrant Kurds, and it is consistent with the existing negative relationship with protest participation. In this regard, the portrayal is as follows: migrant Kurds who experience upward mobility are less likely to participate in protests, whereas those who experience downward mobility are more likely to participate in protests. Migrant Kurds in the urban metropolises constitute the pillar of class-related political mobilization in Turkey, where we observe no significant relationship between class and political mobilization for the total population. On the other hand, migrant Kurds who somehow experience upward mobility refrain from protesting since economic reasons constitute the main motives behind their mobilization.

The thesis and results invite further studies for the following research agenda apart from contributing to Turkey's few quantitative protest analyses. First, class cleavage is still vital for explaining Kurdish mobilization in Turkey. Previous studies overlook the effect of social class by only looking at the effect of origins and destinations. This thesis suggests that further research should account for mobility levels between origins and destinations to reach more harmonized conclusions on social class. Second, this thesis investigates the aggregate protest participation behaviors rather than specific protest cases. In this regard, a synthesized theoretical framework for general protest analysis over time requires a different approach than analyzing specific protest movements. Unfortunately, existing literature provides divergent outcomes on the class-protest relationship, including mobility aspects, and is far behind in providing a comprehensive theoretical framework. Hence, quantitative methodology overlaps

with the purposes of this research. Thirdly, studies related to class should encompass the dynamics of the global South and capture the divergences in proletarian classes, including the informal working class. Class schemes used in the studies on the global North do not fully overlap with the dynamics of the global South and could avoid achieving comprehensive outcomes. In this regard, further studies should recognize the 'industrial reserve army and informalization by synthesizing Marxian class theories under global neoliberalism, especially for the global South. Fourth, the social class defines long-term production relations interrelated with other aspects of social and cultural dimensions. Thus, studies regarding class should consider local vectors that shape the effect of class, such as ethnicity, migration, race, and religion. Reconsideration of other aspects would increase the explanatory capacity. Lastly, studies regarding the class-protest relationship should recognize the global political-economic conditions to contextualize the relationship. Changes in global political-economic factors deeply adjust the mobility and social hierarchies that change protest participation behaviors. Historical evidence shows that people tend to participate in protests and become mobilized when economic conditions are poor, and less tend to mobilize when the economy is smooth and steady. Recognizing the material conditions through class requires an encompassing understanding of the global political-economic context so that studies could be articulated to complete the class-protest puzzle in a broader sense.

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## NOTES

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1. <sup>i</sup> A more detailed interpretation of square-additive models as well as diamond-additive models could be provided upon request.
2. <sup>ii</sup> The DRM models gives relative effect of one step increase, therefore; statistical operations result in the same magnitude. The models presented in the thesis provides the absolute effect of steps increase with reference to class VIII, which is peasantry.
3. <sup>iii</sup> Boratav divides Turkish population into two as urban and rural and uses different class conceptualizations for the two population. The class coalitions he offers change for agrarian milieu. The thesis does not divide Turkish population based on the settlement types; therefore, does not refrain itself from conceptualizing peasants and proletarian classes as the “broad people’s coalition”.
4. <sup>iv</sup> It is calculated as the rate of formal-non manual proletariat from peasantry origins by the rate of total proletariat.
5. \* $p < 0.10$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ . Reference categories are origin and destination I, which is peasantry. Robust standard errors in parentheses.
6. <sup>vi</sup> KONDA Social Policy Module, 2019.